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WESTWARD HO!



“Look ye, my lads, did you ever see such a fowl as that before?”—Page 6

WESTWARD HO!

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WESTWARD HO !

CHAPTER I

HOW MR. OXENHAM SAW THE WHITE BIRD.

ONE bright summer's afternoon, in the year of grace 1575, a tall and fair boy came lingering along Bideford quay, in his scholar's gown, with satchel and slate in hand, watching wistfully the shipping and the sailors, till, just after he had passed the bottom of the High Street, he came opposite to one of the many taverns which looked out upon the river. Outside the door was gathered a group of sailors, listening earnestly to some one who stood in the midst. The boy, all alive for any sea news, must needs go up to them, and take his place among the sailor lads who were peeping and whispering under the elbows of the men ; and so came in for the following speech, delivered in a loud, bold voice, with a strong Devonshire accent.

" I tell you, as I am a gentleman, I saw it with these eyes, and so did Salvation Yeo there, through a window in the lower room ; and we measured the heap, as I am a christened man, seventy foot long, ten foot broad, and twelve foot high, of silver bars, and each bar between a thirty and forty pound weight. And says Captain Drake : ' There, my lads of Devon, I've brought you to the mouth of the world's treasure-house.' "

" Why didn't you bring some of they home, then, Mr. Oxenham ? "

“ Why weren’t you there to help to carry them ? We would have brought ’em away, safe enough, and young Drake and I had broke the door abroad already, but Captain Drake goes off in a dead faint ; and when we came to look, he had a wound in his leg you might have laid three fingers in, and his boots were full of blood, and had been for an hour or more ; but the heart of him was that, that he never knew it till he dropped, and then his brother and I got him away to the boats, he kicking and struggling, and bidding us let him go on with the fight, though every step he took in the sand was in a pool of blood ; and so we got off.”

He who delivered this harangue was a tall and sturdy personage, with a florid, black-bearded face, and bold, restless dark eyes, who leaned, with crossed legs and arms akimbo, against the wall of the house, and seemed in the eyes of the schoolboy a very magnifico—some prince or duke at least. On his head was a broad velvet Spanish hat, in which, instead of a feather, was fastened with a great gold clasp a whole quescal bird, whose gorgeous plumage of fretted golden green shone like one entire precious stone. As he finished his speech, he took off the said hat, and, looking at the bird in it—

“ Look ye, my lads, did you ever see such a fowl as that before ? That’s the bird which the old Indian kings of Mexico let no one wear but their own selves ; and therefore I wear it—I, John Oxenham of South Tawton—for a sign to all brave lads of Devon that, as the Spaniards are the masters of the Indians, we’re the masters of the Spaniards.” And he replaced his hat.

“ Who’ll list ? ” cried a tall gaunt man who stood close to him ; “ now’s your time ! We’ve got forty men to Plymouth now, ready to sail the minute we get back ; and we want a dozen out of you Bideford men,

and just a boy or two, and then we'm off and away, and make our fortunes."

"Now," said Oxenham, "you won't let the Plymouth men say that the Bideford men daren't follow them? Who'll join? Don't think you're buying a pig in a poke. I know the road, and Salvation Yeo here, too, who was the gunner's mate, as well as I do the narrow seas, and better. You ask him to show you the chart of it now, and see if he don't tell you over the ruttier as well as Drake himself."

On which the gaunt man pulled from under his arm a great white buffalo horn, covered with rough etchings of land and sea, and held it up to the admiring ring.

"See here, boys all, and behold the pictur of the place, dra'ed out so natural as ever was life. I got mun from a Portingal, down to the Azores; and he'd pricked mun out, and pricked mun out, wheresoever he'd sailed, and whatsoever he'd seen. Take mun in your hands now, Simon Evans, take mun in your hands; look mun over, and I'll warrant you'll know the way in five minutes so well as ever a shark in the seas." And the horn was passed from hand to hand.

The schoolboy, who had been devouring with eyes and ears all which passed, and had contrived by this time to edge himself into the inner ring, now stood face to face with the hero of the emerald crest, and got as many peps as he could at the wonder. But when he saw the sailors, one after another, having turned it over a while, come forward and offer to join Mr. Oxenham, his soul burned within him for a nearer view of that wondrous horn; and when the group had somewhat broken up, and Oxenham was going into the tavern with his recruits, he asked boldly for a nearer sight of the marvel, which was granted at once.

And now to his astonished gaze displayed themselves cities and harbours, dragons and elephants, whales which fought with sharks, plate-ships of Spain, islands with apes and palm-trees, each with its name over-written, and here and there, "Here is gold ;" and again, "Much gold and silver."

"I say, will you sell this ?" the boy asked.

"Yea, marry." After much fumbling, he pulled out a tester (the only one he had), and asked if that would buy it.

"That ! no, nor twenty of them."

The boy thought over what a good knight-errant would do in such case, and then answered, "Tell you what ; I'll fight you for it."

"Thank'ee, sir !"

"Break the jackanapes's head for him, Yeo," said Oxenham.

"Call me jackanapes again, and I break yours, sir." And the boy lifted his fist fiercely.

Oxenham looked at him a minute smilingly. "Tut ! tut ! my man ; hit one of your own size, if you will, and spare little folk like me !"

"If I have a boy's age, sir, I have a man's fist. I shall be fifteen years old this month, and know how to answer any one who insults me."

Oxenham bade the lad tell him why he was so keen after the horn.

"Because," said he, looking up boldly, "I want to go to sea. I want to see the Indies. I want to fight the Spaniards."

"And you shall," cried Oxenham. "Whose son are you, my gallant fellow ?"

"Mr. Leigh's, of Burrough Court."

"Bless his soul ! I know him as well as I do the

Eddystone, and his kitchen too. Who sups with him to-night ? ”

“ Sir Richard Grenville.”

“ Dick Grenville ? I did not know he was in town. Go home and tell your father John Oxenham will come and keep him company. There, off with you ! I’ll make all straight with the good gentleman, and you shall have your venture with me.—And as for the horn, let him have the horn, Yeo, and I’ll give you a noble for it.”

“ Not a penny, noble captain. If young master will take a poor mariner’s gift, there it is, for the sake of his love to the calling, and Heaven send him luck therein.” And the good fellow, with the impulsive generosity of a true sailor, thrust the horn into the boy’s hands, and walked away to escape thanks.

Mr. Oxenham swaggered into the tavern, followed by his new men ; and Amyas Leigh (so the boy was named) took his way homewards, nursing his precious horn, trembling between hope and fear, and blushing with maidenly shame and a half sense of wrong-doing at having revealed suddenly to a stranger the darling wish which he had hidden from his father and mother ever since he was ten years old.

Mr. Oxenham came that evening to supper, as he had promised ; but as people supped in those days in much the same manner as they do now, we may drop the thread of the story for a few hours, and take it up again after supper is over.

“ Come now, Dick Grenville, do thou talk the good man round, and I’ll warrant myself to talk round the good wife.”

“ You have asked his father and mother ; what is their answer ? ”

“ Mine is this,” said Mr. Leigh : “ if it be God’s

will that my boy should become hereafter such a mariner as Sir Richard Grenville, let him go, and God be with him ; but let him first bide here at home and be trained, if God give me grace, to become such a gentleman as Sir Richard Grenville."

Sir Richard bowed low, and Mrs. Leigh, catching up the last word—

"There, Mr. Oxenham, you cannot gainsay that, unless you will be discourteous to his worship. And for me, though it be a weak woman's reason, yet it is a mother's: he is my only child. His elder brother is far away. Ah ! Mr. Oxenham, you have no child, or you would not ask for mine !"

"And how do you know that, my sweet madam ?" said the adventurer, turning first deadly pale and then glowing red. Her last words had touched him to the quick in some unexpected place ; and, rising, he courteously laid her hand to his lips and said, " I say no more. Farewell, sweet madam, and God send all men such wives as you."

"And all wives," said she, smiling, "such husbands as mine."

"Nay, I will not say that," answered he, with a half sneer ; and then, "Farewell, friend Leigh.—Farewell, gallant Dick Grenville. God send I see thee Lord High Admiral, when I come home. And yet, why should I come home ? Will you pray for poor Jack, gentles ?"

"Tut, tut, man ! good words,"¹ said Leigh ; "let us drink to our merry meeting before you go." Rising, and putting the tankard of malmsey² to his lips, he passed it to Sir Richard, who rose and, saying, "To the fortune of a bold mariner and a gallant gentleman," drank, and put the cup into Oxenham's hand.

The adventurer's face was flushed, and his eye wild. Whether from the liquor he had drunk during the day, or whether from Mrs. Leigh's last speech, he had not been himself for a few minutes. He lifted the cup, and was in the act to pledge them, when he suddenly dropped it on the table, and pointed, staring and trembling, up and down, and round the room, as if following some fluttering object.

"There! do you see it? The bird!—the bird with the white breast!"

Each looked at the other; but Leigh, who was a quick-witted man, and an old courtier, forced a laugh instantly, and cried—

"Nonsense, brave Jack Oxenham! Leave white birds for men who will show the white feather. Mrs. Leigh waits to pledge you."

Oxenham recovered himself in a moment, pledged them all round, drinking deeply and fiercely; and, after hearty farewells, departed, never hinting again at his strange exclamation.

"And now come hither to me, my adventurous godson, and don't look in such doleful dumps," said Sir Richard, turning to Amyas. "I hear you have broken all the sailor-boys' heads already."

"Nearly all," said young Amyas, with due modesty. "But am I not to go to sea?"

"All things in their time, my boy, and God forbid that either I or your worthy parents should keep you from that noble calling which is the safeguard of this England and her Queen. But you do not wish to live and die the master of a trawler?"

"I should like to be a brave adventurer, like Mr. Oxenham."

"God grant you become a braver man than he!"

For, as I think, to be bold against the enemy is common to the brutes ; but the prerogative of a man is to be bold against himself."

"How, sir ?"

"To conquer our own fancies, Amyas, and our ambition, in the sacred name of duty. This it is to be truly brave, and truly strong ; for he who cannot rule himself, how can he rule his crew or his fortunes ? Come, now, I will make you a promise. If you will bide quietly at home, and learn from your father and mother all which befits a gentleman and a Christian, as well as a seaman, the day shall come when you shall sail with Richard Grenville himself, or with better men than he, on a nobler errand than gold-hunting on the Spanish Main."

And so Amyas Leigh went back to school, and Mr. Oxenham went his way to Plymouth again, and sailed for the Spanish Main.

CHAPTER II

HOW AMYAS CAME HOME THE FIRST TIME

Five years are past and gone. It is nine of the clock on a still, bright November morning, but the bells of Bideford church are still ringing for the daily service two hours after the usual time, and, instead of going soberly according to wont, cannot help breaking forth every five minutes into a jocund peal, and tumbling head over heels in ecstasies of joy. Bideford streets are a very flower-garden of all the colours, swarming with seamen and burghers, and burghers' wives and daughters, all in their holiday attire. Garlands are hung across the streets, and tapestries from every window. The ships in the pool are dressed in all their flags, and give tumultuous vent to their feelings by peals of ordnance

of every size. Every stable is crammed with horses ; and Sir Richard Grenville's house is like a very tavern, with eating and drinking, and unsaddling, and running to and fro of grooms and serving-men. Along the little churchyard, packed full with women, streams all the gentle blood of North Devon—and on into the church, where all are placed according to their degrees, or at least as near as may be. At last there is a silence, and a looking toward the door, and then distant music, flutes and hautboys, drums and trumpets, which come braying, and screaming, and thundering merrily up to the very church doors, and then cease ; and the churchwardens and sidesmen bustle down to the entrance, rods in hand, and there is a general whisper and rustle, not without glad tears and blessings from many a woman, and from some men also, as the wonder of the day enters, and the rector begins, not the morning service, but the good old thanksgiving after a victory at sea.

And what is it which has thus sent old Bideford wild with joy ? Why are all eyes fixed, with greedy admiration, on those four weather-beaten mariners, decked out with knots and ribbons by loving hands ; and yet more on that gigantic figure who walks before them, a beardless boy, and yet with the frame and stature of a Hercules, towering, like Saul of old, a head and shoulders above all the congregation, with his golden locks flowing down over his shoulders ? And why, as the five go instinctively up to the altar, and there fall on their knees before the rails, are all eyes turned to the pew where the now widowed Mrs. Leigh of Burrough has hid her face between her hands, and her hood rustles and shakes to her joyful sobs ? Because there was fellow-feeling of old in merry England, in county, and in town ; and these are Devon men, and men of Bideford, whose names

are Amyas Leigh of Burrough, John Staveley, Michael Heard, and Jonas Marshall of Bideford, and Thomas Braund of Clovelly ; and they, the first of all English mariners, have sailed round the world with Francis Drake, and are come hither to give God thanks.

The prayers being ended, the rector ascends the pulpit, and begins his sermon on the text :—

“The heaven and the heaven of heavens are the Lord’s ; the whole earth hath he given to the children of men,” deducing therefrom craftily, to the exceeding pleasure of his hearers, the iniquity of the Spaniards in dispossessing the Indians, and in arrogating to themselves the sovereignty of the tropic seas ; and the justice, valour, and glory of Mr. Drake and his expedition, as testified by God’s miraculous protection of him and his.

When, the sermon ended, the communion service had begun, and the bread and the wine were given to those five mariners, every gallant gentleman who stood near them knelt and received the elements with them, and then rose to join with heart and voice in the *Te Deum*, which was the closing act of all. No sooner had the clerk given out the first verse of that great hymn, than it was taken up by five hundred voices within the church, in bass and tenor, treble and alto ; the chant was caught up by the crowd outside, and rang away over roof and river, up to the woods and down to the marshes, in wave on wave of harmony. And, as it died away, the shipping in the river made answer with their thunder, and the crowd streamed out again toward the Bridge Head, whither Sir Richard Grenville and Mr. Salterne, the mayor, led the five heroes of the day to await the pageant which had been prepared in honour of them. As they went by, there were few in the crowd who did not press forward to shake them by the hand ; and not only them,

but their parents and kinsfolk who walked behind, till Mrs. Leigh, her stately joy quite broken down at last, could only answer between her sobs, "Go along, good people—and God send you all such sons!"

"God give me back mine!" cried an old red-cloaked dame in the crowd; and then, struck by some hidden impulse, she sprang forward, and, catching hold of young Amyas's sleeve—

"Kind sir! dear sir! For Christ His sake answer a poor old widow woman!"

"What is it, dame?" quoth Amyas gently enough.

"Did you see my son to the Indies?—my son Salvation?"

"Salvation?" replied he, with an air of one who recollected the name.

"Yes, sure, Salvation Yeo of Clovelly."

Amyas recollected now. It was the name of the sailor who had given him the horn five years ago.

"My good dame," said he, "the Indies are a very large place, and your son may be safe and sound enough there, without my having seen him. I knew one Salvation Yeo. But he must have come with——. By-the-bye, godfather, has Mr. Oxenham come home?"

There was a dead silence for a moment among the gentlemen round; and then Sir Richard said solemnly, and in a low voice, turning away from the old dame—

"Amyas, Mr. Oxenham has not come home; and, from the day he sailed, no word has been heard of him and all his crew."

"Oh, Sir Richard! and you kept me from sailing with him! Had I known this before I went into church, I had had one mercy more to thank God for."

"Thank Him all the more in thy life, my child!" whispered his mother.

“ And no news of him whatsoever ? ”

“ None, but that the year after he sailed, a ship belonging to Andrew Barker of Bristol took out of a Spanish caravel, somewhere off the Honduras, his two brass guns.”

“ Yes ! ” cried the old woman ; “ they brought home the guns, and never brought home my boy ! ”

“ They never saw your boy, mother,” said Sir Richard.

“ But I’ve seen him ! I saw him in a dream four years last Whitsuntide, as plain as I see you now, gentles, a-lying upon a rock, calling for a drop of water to cool his tongue. Oh dear me ! ” And the old dame wept bitterly.

“ There is a rose noble for you ! ” said Mrs. Leigh.

“ And there another ! ” said Sir Richard. And in a few minutes four or five gold coins were in her hand. But the old dame did but look wonderingly at the gold a moment, and then—

“ Ah ! dear gentles, God’s blessing on you ; but gold won’t buy back childer ! Oh, young gentleman ! make me a promise : if you want God’s blessing on you this day, bring me back my boy, if you find him sailing on the seas ! Bring him back, and an old widow’s blessing be on you ! ”

Amyas promised—what else could he do ?—and the group hurried on ; but the lad’s heart was heavy in the midst of joy, with the thought of John Oxenham, as he walked through the churchyard, and down the short street which led between the ancient school and the still more ancient town house to the head of the long bridge, across which the pageant, having been arranged “ east-the-water,” was to defile, and then turn to the right along the quay.

CHAPTER III

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF MR. JOHN OXENHAM

Old Stow House, some four miles beyond the Cornish border, was Sir Richard Grenville's home. About eleven o'clock one bright forenoon, shortly after the home-coming of Amyas Leigh, Sir Richard and his godson were pacing up and down the terraced garden, talking long and earnestly.

"And I may go to Ireland to-morrow?" enquired Amyas.

"You shall sail in the *Mary* for Milford Haven, with these letters to Winter. If the wind serves, you may bid the master drop down the river to-night, and be off; for we must lose no time."

"Winter?" said Amyas. "He is no friend of mine, since he left Drake and us so cowardly at the Straits of Magellan."

"Duty must not wait for private quarrels, even though they be just ones, lad; but he will not be your general. When you come to the Marshal, or the Lord-Deputy, give either of them this letter, and they will set you work—and hard work too, I warrant."

"I want nothing better."

"Right, lad. Now come in, and take the letters, and to horse. And if I hear of thee dead there at Smerwick fort, with all thy wounds in front, I shall weep for thy mother, lad; but I shall have never a sigh for thee."

When they went down into the house, the first person whom they met was the old steward, in search of his master.

"There is a manner of roog, Sir Richard, a masterless man, at the door; a very forward fellow, and must needs speak with you."

"A masterless man ? He had better not speak to me, unless he is in love with gaol and gallows."

"Well, your worship," said the steward, "I expect that is what he does want, for he swears he will not leave the gate till he has seen you."

"Seen me ? Halidame ! he shall see me, here and at Launceston too, if he likes. Bring him in."

"Fegs, Sir Richard, we are half afeard, with your good leave——"

"Hillo, Tony," cried Amyas, "who was ever afeard yet with Sir Richard's good leave ?"

"What, has the fellow a tail or horns ?"

"Massy no ; but I be afeard of treason for your honour : for the fellow is pinked all over in heathen patterns, and as brown as a filbert ; and a tall roog, a very strong roog, sir, and a foreigner too, and a mighty staff with him. Indeed the grooms have no stomach to handle him, nor the dogs neither, or he had been under the pump before now, for they that saw him coming up the hill swear that he had fire coming out of his mouth."

"Fire out of his mouth ?" said Sir Richard ; "the men are drunk."

"Pinked all over ? He must be a sailor," said Amyas. "Let me out and see the fellow, and if he needs putting forth——"

"Why, I dare say he is not so big but what he will go into thy pocket. So go, lad, while I finish my writing."

Amyas went out, and at the back door, leaning on his staff, stood a tall, raw-boned, ragged man, "pinked all over," as the steward had said.

"Hillo, lad !" quoth Amyas. "Before we come to talk, thou wilt please to lay down that Plymouth cloak of thine." And he pointed to the cudgel, which among West-country mariners usually bore that name.

"I'll warrant," said the old steward, "that where he found his cloak he found a purse not far off."

"But not hose or doublet; so the magical virtue of his staff has not helped him much.—But put down thy staff, man, and speak like a Christian, if thou be one."

"I am a Christian, though I look like a heathen; and no rogue, though a masterless man, alas! But I want nothing, deserving nothing, and only ask to speak with Sir Richard before I go on my way."

There was something stately and yet humble about the man's tone and manner which attracted Amyas, and he asked more gently where he was going and whence he came.

"From Padstow Port, sir, to Clovelly town, to see my old mother, if indeed she be yet alive, which God knoweth."

"Clovally man! why didn't thee say thee was Clovally man?" asked all the grooms at once, to whom a West-countryman was of course a brother. The old steward asked—

"What's thy mother's name, then?"

"Susan Yeo."

"What! that lived under the archway?" asked a groom.

"Lived?" said the man.

"Iss, sure; her died three days since, so we heard, poor soul."

The man stood quite silent and unmoved for a minute or two, and then said quietly to himself, in Spanish, "That which is, is best."

"You speak Spanish?" asked Amyas, more and more interested.

"I had need to do so, young sir; I have been five years in the Spanish Main, and only set foot on shore two

days ago. And if you will let me have speech of Sir Richard, I will tell him that at which both the ears of him that heareth it shall tingle ; and if not, I can but go on to Mr. Cary of Clovelly, if he be yet alive, and there disburden my soul. But I would sooner have spoken with one that is a mariner like to myself."

"And you shall," said Amyas.—"Steward, we will have this man in ; for all his rags he is a man of wit."

So in they went, where Sir Richard sat in his library among books, dispatches, state papers, and warrants.

"Hillo, Amyas, have you bound the wild man already, and brought him in to swear allegiance ?"

But before Amyas could answer, the man looked earnestly on him. "Amyas," said he ; "is that your name, sir ?"

"Amyas Leigh is my name, at your service, good fellow."

"Of Burrough by Bideford ?"

"Why, then, what do you know of me ?"

"Oh, sir, sir, young brains and happy ones have short memories, but old and sad brains too too long ones, often ! Do you mind one that was with Mr. Oxenham, sir ? One, sir, that gave you a horn, a toy with a chart on it."

"Soul alive !" cried Amyas, catching him by the hand ; "and are you he ? The horn ? Why, I have it still, and will keep it to my dying day too. But where is Mr. Oxenham ?"

"Yes, my good fellow, where is Mr. Oxenham ?" asked Sir Richard, rising. "You are somewhat overhasty in welcoming your old acquaintance, Amyas, before we have heard from him whether he can give honest account of himself and of his captain. And first, who art thou, and whence ?"

"Well, sir," said the man, "my name is Salvation

Yeo, born in Clovelly Street, in the year 1526, where my father exercised the mystery of a barber-surgeon, and a preacher of the people since called Anabaptists, for which I return humble thanks to God. I was bred to the sea from my youth, and was with Captain Hawkins in his three voyages, which he made to Guinea for negro slaves, and thence to the West Indies.

“I went, as Mr. Leigh knows, to Nombre de Dios, with Mr. Drake and Mr. Oxenham, in 1572, where what we saw and did your worship, I suppose, knows as well as I; and there was, as you’ve heard maybe, a covenant between Mr. Oxenham and Mr. Drake to sail the South Seas together, which they made, your worship, in my hearing, under the tree over Panama. For when Mr. Drake came down from the tree, after seeing the sea afar off, Mr. Oxenham and I went up and saw it too; and when we came down, Drake says, ‘John, I have made a vow to God that I will sail that water, if I live and God gives me grace.’ Which he had done, sir, upon his bended knees, like a godly man as he always was; and would I had taken after him! And Mr. O. says, ‘I am with you, Drake, to live or die; and I think I know some one there already, so we shall not be quite among strangers,’ and laughed withal. Well, sirs, that voyage, as you know, never came off, because Captain Drake was fighting in Ireland; so Mr. Oxenham, who must be up and doing, sailed for himself, and I who loved him, God knows, like a brother (saving the difference in our ranks), helped him to get the crew together, and went as his gunner. That was in 1575. As you know, he had a 140-ton ship, sir, and seventy men out of Plymouth and Fowey and Dartmouth, and many of them old hands of Drake’s, beside a dozen or so from Bideford that I picked up when I saw young master here.

“ Well, sirs, we came to the shore of New Spain, near to the old place—that’s Nombre de Dios ; and there Mr. Oxenham went ashore into the woods with a boat’s crew, to find the negroes who helped us three years before. Those are the Cimaroons, gentles, negro slaves who have fled from their Spanish masters, and live wild, like the beasts that perish.

CHAPTER IV

MR. OXENHAM’S HISTORY (*continued*)

“ Well, sirs, after three days the captain comes back, looking heavy enough, and says, ‘ We played our trick once too often when we played it once. There is no chance of stopping another mule-train, now. The Cimaroons say that since our last visit they never move without plenty of soldiers—two hundred shot at least. Therefore,’ he said, ‘ my gallants, we must either return empty-handed from this, the very market and treasury of the whole Indies, or do such a deed as men never did before, which I shall like all the better for that very reason.’ And we asking his meaning, ‘ Why,’ he said, ‘ if Drake will not sail the South Seas, we will.’ And, for our confirmation, showed me and the rest the superscription of a letter, and said, ‘ How I came by this is none of your business, but I have had it in my bosom ever since I left Plymouth ; and I tell you now, what I forbore to tell you at first, that the South Seas have been my mark all along ! Such news have I herein of plate-ships, and gold-ships, and what not, which will come up from Quito and Lima this very month—all which, with the pearls of the Gulf of Panama, and other wealth unspeakable, will be ours, if we have but true English hearts within us.’

"At which, gentles, we were like madmen for lust of that gold, and cheerfully undertook a toil incredible : for first we run our ship aground in a great wood which grew in the very sea itself, and then took out her masts, and covered her in boughs, with her four cast pieces of great ordnance ; and, leaving no man in her, started for the South Seas across the neck of Panama, with two small pieces of ordnance and our culverins, and good store of victuals, and with us six of those negroes for a guide, and so twelve leagues to a river which runs into the South Sea.

"And there, having cut wood, we made a pinnace (and work enough we had at it) of five-and-forty foot in the keel ; and in her down the stream, and to the Isle of Pearls in the Gulf of Panama."

"Into the South Sea ? Impossible !" said Sir Richard. "Have a care what you say, my man ; for there is that about you which would make me sorry to find you out a liar."

"Impossible or not, liar or none, we went there, sir."

"Question him, Amyas, lest he turn out to have been beforehand with you."

The man looked inquiringly at Amyas, who said—

"Well, my man, of the Gulf of Panama I cannot ask you, for I never was inside it. But what other parts of the coast do you know ?"

"Every inch, sir, from Cabo San Francisco to Lima ; more is my sorrow, for I was a galley-slave there for two years and more."

"You know Lima ?"

"I was there three times, worshipful gentlemen, and the last was February come two years ; and there I helped lade a great plate-ship—the *Cacafuogo* they called her."

Amyas started. Sir Richard nodded to him gently to be silent, and then—

“ And what became of her, my lad ? ”

“ God knows, who knows all. I broke prison six weeks afterwards, and never heard but that she got safe into Panama.”

“ You never heard, then, that she was taken ? ”

“ Taken, your worships ? Who should take her ? ”

“ Dost thou not know that Captain Drake took that *Cacafuogo* and all her freight in February come two years ? ” cried Sir Richard, springing up.

“ Captain Drake in the South Seas ? He saw them, sir, from the tree-top over Panama, when I was with him, and I too ; but sailed them, sir—sailed them ? ”

“ Yes, and round the world too,” said Amyas, “ and I with him ; and took that very *Cacafuogo* off Cape San Francisco, as she came up to Panama.”

“ Glory to God ! glory to God ! O Lord, I thank thee ! Captain Drake in the South Seas ! The blood of Thy innocents avenged, O Lord ! The spoiler spoiled, and the proud robbed. Glory, glory ! Oh, tell me, sir, did she fight—did she fight ? ”

“ We gave her three pieces of ordnance only, and struck down her mizzen mast, and then boarded sword in hand, but never had need to strike a blow.”

“ Oh, sir, tell me, did you get the ship that came up after her ? ”

“ What was that ? ”

“ A long race-ship, sir, from Guayaquil, with an old gentleman on board ; Don Francisco de Xararte was his name, and by token he had a gold falcon hanging to a chain round his neck, and a green stone in the breast of it. I saw it as we rowed him aboard. Oh, tell me, sir—did you take that ship ? ”

"We did take that ship, and the jewel too, and her Majesty has it at this very hour."

"Then tell me, sir," said he slowly, as if he dreaded an answer—"tell me, sir, and oh! try and mind—was there a little maid aboard with the old gentleman?"

"A little maid? Let me think. No; I saw none."

The man settled his features again sadly.

"I thought not. I never saw her come aboard. Still I hoped, like—I hoped."

"What have you to do with this little maid, then, good fellow?" asked Grenville.

"Ah, sir, before I tell you that, I must go back and finish the story of Mr. Oxenham. To the Island of Pearls we came—we and some of the negroes. We found many huts, and Indians fishing for pearls, and also a fair house, with porches, but no Spaniard therein save one man. For ten days we lay quiet, letting neither negro nor Spaniard leave the island, and took good store of pearls, feeding sumptuously on wild cattle and hogs until the tenth day, when there came by a small bark; her we took, and found her from Quito, and on board 60,000 pezos of gold, and other store. With which if we had been content, gentlemen, all had gone well. And some were willing to go back at once, having both treasure and pearls in plenty; but Mr. O. he waxed right mad, and swore to slay any one who made that motion again, assuring us that the Lima ship of which he had news was far greater and richer, and would make princes of us all; which bark came in sight on the sixteenth day, and was taken without shot or slaughter. The taking of which bark, I verily believe, was the ruin of every mother's son of us."

And, being asked why, he answered, "First, because

of the discontent which was bred thereby ; for on board was found no gold, but only 100,000 pezos of silver."

Sir Richard Grenville.—Thou greedy fellow ! and was not that enough to stay your stomachs ?

Yeo answered that he would to God it had been, but that, moreover, the weight of that silver was afterwards a hindrance to them, and a fresh cause of discontent, as he would afterwards declare.

"In that bark of Lima," continued Yeo, "he took a young lady, as fair as the sunshine, sir, and seemingly about two or three and twenty years of age, having with her a tall young lad of sixteen, and a little girl, a marvelously pretty child, of about six or seven. And the lady herself was of an excellent beauty, like a whale's tooth for whiteness, so that all the crew wondered at her, and could not be satisfied with looking upon her. And, gentlemen, this was strange, that the lady seemed in no wise afraid or mournful, and bid her little girl fear naught, as did also Mr. Oxenham ; but the lad kept a very sour countenance, and the more when he saw the lady and Mr. Oxenham speaking together apart.

"Well, sir, after this good luck we were minded to have gone straight back to the river whence we came, and so home to England with all speed. But Mr. Oxenham persuaded us to return to the island and get a few more pearls ; and so went ashore with the lady to that house, whence for three days he never came forth, and would have remained longer, but that the men, finding but few pearls, and being wearied with the watching and warding so many Spaniards and negroes, came clamouring to him, and swore that they would return or leave him there with the lady. So all went on board the pinnacle again, every one in ill humour with the captain, and he with them.

“ Well, sirs, we came back to the mouth of the river, and there began our troubles ; for the negroes, as soon as we were on shore, called on Mr. Oxenham to fulfil the bargain he had made with them. And now it came out (what few of us knew till then) that he had agreed with the Cimaroons that they should have all the prisoners which were taken, save the gold. And he, though loath, was about to give up the Spaniards to them, near forty in all, supposing that they intended to use them as slaves ; but as we all stood talking, one of the Spaniards, understanding what was forward, threw himself on his knees before Mr. Oxenham, and, shrieking like a madman, entreated not to be given up into their hands, ‘ for,’ said he, ‘ they never take a Spanish prisoner but they roast him alive.’ We asked the negroes if this was possible. To which some answered, What was that to us ? But other said boldly that it was true enough.

“ At this we were like men amazed for very horror ; and Mr. Oxenham said, ‘ You incarnate fiends, if you had taken these fellows for slaves, it had been fair enough ; for you were once slaves to them, and I doubt not cruelly used enough : but as for this abomination,’ says he, ‘ God do so to me, and more also, if I let one of them come into your murderous hands.’ So there was a great quarrel ; but Mr. Oxenham stoutly bade put the prisoners on board the ships again, and so let the prizes go, taking with him only the treasure, and the lady and the little maid. And so the lad went on to Panama, God’s wrath having gone out against us.

“ Well, sirs, the Cimaroons after that went away from us, swearing revenge (for which we cared little enough), and we rowed up the river to a place where three streams met, and then up the least of the three, some

four days' journey, till it grew all shoal and swift ; and there we hauled the pinnace upon the sands, and Mr. Oxenham asked the men whether they were willing to carry the gold and silver over the mountains to the North Sea. Some of them at first were loath to do it, and I and others advised that we should leave the plate behind, and take the gold only, for it would have cost us three or four journeys at the least. But Mr. Oxenham promised every man 100 pezos of silver over and above his wages, which made them content enough, and we were all to start the morrow morning.

" But, sirs, that night, as God had ordained, came a mishap by some rash speeches of Mr. Oxenham's, which threw all abroad again ; for when we had carried the treasure about half a league inland, and hidden it away in a house which we made of boughs, Mr. O., being always full of that his fair lady, spoke to me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade, and a few more, saying, ' That we had no need to return to England, seeing that we were already in the very garden of Eden, and wanted for nothing, but could live without labour or toil ; and that it was better, when we got over to the North Sea, to go and seek out some fair island, and there dwell in joy and pleasure till our lives' end. And we two,' he said, ' will be king and queen, and you, whom I can trust, my officers ;' which words I liked well, as did William Penberthy.

" But the rest, sirs, took the matter all across, and began murmuring against the captain, saying that poor honest mariners like them had always the labour and the pain, while he took his delight ; and that they would have at least one merry night before they were slain by the Cimaroons, or eaten by panthers and lagartos ; and so got out of the pinnace two great skins of Canary wine,

which were taken in the Lima prize, and sat themselves down to drink. Moreover, there were in the pinnacle a great sight of hens, which came from the same prize ; and so the men cooked and ate them, plucking them on board the pinnacle, and letting the feathers fall into the stream.

“ But when William Penberthy, my good comrade, saw the feathers floating away down, he asked them if they were mad, to lay a trail by which the Spaniards would surely track them out if they came after them, as without doubt they would. But they laughed him to scorn, and said that no Spanish cur dared follow on the heels of true English mastiffs as they were, and other boastful speeches.

“ Next morning, when the wine was gone out of them, Mr. O. asked them whether they would go to the hills with him, and find those negroes, and persuade them after all to carry the treasure. To which they agreed after a while, thinking that so they should save themselves labour ; and went off with Mr. Oxenham, leaving me and Penberthy and four Plymouth men to watch the lady and the treasure. So he parted with much weeping and wailing of the lady, and was gone seven days.

“ Well, sir, on the seventh day we six were down by the pinnacle clearing her out, and the little maid with us gathering of flowers, and William Penberthy fishing on the bank, about a hundred yards below, when on a sudden he leaps up and runs towards us, crying, ‘ Here come our hens’ feathers back again with a vengeance ! ’ and so bade catch up the little maid, and run for the house, for the Spaniards were upon us.

“ Which was too true : for before we could win the house, there were full eighty shot at our heels, but could not overtake us ; nevertheless, some of them, stopping,

fixed their calivers and let fly, killing one of the Plymouth men. The rest of us escaped to the house, and, catching up the lady, fled forth, not knowing whither we went ; while the Spaniards, finding the house and treasure, pursued us no farther.

“ For all that day and the next we wandered in great misery—the lady weeping continually, and calling for Mr. Oxenham most piteously, and the little maid likewise, till with much ado we found the track of our comrades, and went up that as best we might ; but at nightfall, by good hap, we met the whole crew coming back, and with them two hundred negroes or more, with bows and arrows.

“ Mr. O. offered us the half of the treasure, if we would go back with him and rescue it from the Spaniards. At which the lady wept and wailed much ; but I took upon myself to comfort her, though I was but a simple mariner, telling her that it stood upon Mr. Oxenham’s honour. So, after much ado, back they went again—I and Penberthy, and the three Plymouth men which escaped from the pinnace, keeping the lady as before.

“ Well, sirs, we waited five days, having made houses of boughs as before, without hearing aught ; and on the sixth we saw coming afar off Mr. Oxenham, and with him fifteen or twenty men, who seemed very weary and wounded ; and when we looked for the rest to be behind them, behold there were no more ; at which, sirs, as you may well think, our hearts sank within us.

“ And Mr. O., coming nearer, cried out afar off, ‘ All is lost ! ’ and so walked into the camp without a word, and sat himself down at the foot of a great tree with his head between his hands.

“ The men told me, and I believe truly, how they found the enemy awaiting them in a little copse of great

trees, well fortified with barricades of boughs, and having with them our two falcons, which they had taken out of the pinnacle. And how Mr. Oxenham divided both the English and the negroes into two bands, that one might attack the enemy in front, and the other in the rear, and so set upon them with great fury, and would have utterly driven them out, but that the negroes, who had come on with much howling, like very wild beasts, being suddenly scared with the shot and noise of the ordnance, turned and fled, leaving the Englishmen alone ; in which evil strait Mr. O. fought like a very Guy of Warwick, and I verily believe every man of them likewise, for there was none of them who had not his shrewd scratch to show.

“ And, indeed, Mr. Oxenham's party had once gotten within the barricades ; but the Spaniards, being sheltered by the tree trunks (and especially by one mighty tree, borne up two fathoms high upon its own roots, as it were upon arches), shot at them with such advantage that they had several slain, and seven more taken alive, only among the roots of that tree. So, seeing that they could prevail nothing, having little but their pikes and swords, they were fain to give back ; though Mr. Oxenham swore he would not stir a foot, and, making at the Spanish captain, was borne down with pikes, and hardly pulled away by some, who at last, reminding him of his lady, persuaded him to come away with the rest. Whereon the other party fled also ; but what had become of them they knew not, for they took another way. And so they miserably drew off, having lost in men eleven killed and seven taken alive, besides five of the rascal negroes who were killed before they had time to run ; and there was an end of the matter.

CHAPTER V

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF SALVATION YEO

“ But the next day, gentlemen, in came some five-and-twenty more, being the wreck of the other party. We then went forward and over the mountains till we came to a little river which ran northward, which seemed to lead into the Northern Sea ; and there Mr. O. bade us cut down trees and make canoes, to go down to the sea ; which we began to do with great labour and little profit, hewing down trees with our swords, and burning them out with fire, which, after much labour, we kindled ; but as we were a-burning out of the first tree and cutting down of another, a great party of negroes came upon us, and with much friendly show bade us flee for our lives, for the Spaniards were upon us in great force.

“ And so we were up and away again, hardly able to drag our legs after us for hunger and weariness and the broiling heat. And some were taken (God help them !), and some fled with the negroes, of whom what became God alone knoweth ; but eight or ten held on with the captain, among whom was I, and fled downward toward the sea for one day ; but afterwards, finding by the noise in the woods that the Spaniards were on the track of us, we turned up again toward the inland, and, coming to a cliff, climbed up over it, drawing up the lady and the little maid with cords of liana (which hang from those trees as honeysuckle does here, but exceeding stout and long, even to fifty fathoms) ; and, so breaking the track, hoped to be out of the way of the enemy.

“ By which, nevertheless, we only increased our misery. For two fell from that cliff, and miserably broke their bones ; and others fell sick of fevers, where

was no drop of water, but rock of pumice stone as bare as the back of my hand. For the dear life we must down again and into the woods, or be burned up alive upon those rocks.

“ So, getting down the slope on the farther side, we came into the woods once more, and there wandered for many days, I know not how many, our shoes being gone, and our clothes all rent off us with brakes and briars.

“ And so, to make few words of a sad matter, at last there were none left but Mr. Oxenham and the lady and the little maid, together with me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And Mr. Oxenham always led the lady, and Penberthy and I carried the little maid. And for food we had fruits, such as we could find, and water we got from the leaves of certain lilies which grew on the bark of trees, which I found by seeing the monkeys drink at them ; and the little maid called them monkey-cups, and asked for them continually, making me climb for them. And so we wandered on, and upward into very high mountains, always fearing lest the Spaniards should track us with dogs, which made the lady leap up often in her sleep, crying that the bloodhounds were upon her. And it befell upon a day that we came into a great wood of ferns, where was very pleasant shade, cool and green ; and there, gentlemen, we sat down upon a bank of moss, like folks desperate and fordone, and every one looked the other in the face for a long while.

“ But on a sudden there was a great cry in the wood, and coming through the trees on all sides Spanish arquebusiers, a hundred strong at least, and negroes with them, who bade us stand, or they would shoot. William Penberthy leaped up, crying ‘ Treason ! ’ and, running upon the nearest negro, ran him through, and

then another, and then, falling on the Spaniards, fought manfully till he was borne down with pikes, and so died. And so we were all taken, and I and Mr. Oxenham bound with cords ; but the soldiers made a litter for the lady and child, by commandment of Señor Diego de Trees, their commander, a very courteous gentleman.

“ Well, sirs, we were brought down to the place where the house of boughs had been by the river-side ; there we went over in boats, and found waiting for us certain Spanish gentlemen, and among others one old and ill-favoured man, grey-bearded and bent, in a suit of black velvet, who seemed to be a great man among them. And if you will believe me, Mr. Leigh, that was none other than the old man with the gold falcon at his breast, Don Francisco Xararte by name, whom you found aboard of the Lima ship.

“ ‘ Fool ! ’ said the lady to him, ‘ I will waste no words upon you. Farewell, my love, my life ! and farewell, señors ! May you be more merciful to your daughters than my parents were to me ! ’ And so, catching a dagger from the girdle of one of the soldiers, smote herself to the heart, and fell dead before them all.

“ At which Mr. Oxenham smiled, and said, ‘ That was worthy of us both. If you will unbind my hands, señors, I shall be most happy to copy so fair a school-mistress.’

“ But Don Diego shook his head, and said—

“ ‘ It were well for you, valiant señor, were I at liberty to do so ; but, on questioning those of your sailors whom I have already taken, I cannot hear that you have any letters of licence, either from the Queen of England or any other potentate. I am compelled, therefore, to ask you whether this is so, for it is a matter of life and death.’

“To which Mr. Oxenham answered merrily, ‘That so it was, but that he was not aware that any potentate’s licence was required to permit a gentleman’s meeting his lady love.’ And added that, if he was to be hanged, as he supposed, the only favour which he asked for was a long drop. And all the while, gentlemen, he still kept his eyes fixed on the lady’s corpse, till he was led away with me.

“And now, sirs, what befell me after that matters little ; for I never saw Captain Oxenham again, nor ever shall in this life.”

“He was hanged, then ? ”

“So I heard for certain the next year, and with him the gunner and sundry more ; but some were given away for slaves to the Spaniards, and may be alive now, unless, like me, they have fallen into the cruel clutches of the Inquisition.”

“But how did you get into the Inquisition ? ”

“Why, sir, after we were taken, we set forth to go down the river again ; and the old Don took the little maid with him in one boat (and bitterly she screeched at parting from us, and from the poor dead corpse), and Mr. Oxenham with Don Diego de Trees in another, and I in a third. And from the Spaniards I learnt that we were to be taken down to Lima, to the Viceroy ; but that the old man lived hard by Panama, and was going straight back to Panama forthwith with the little maid. And when I heard that, seeing that there was nothing but death before me, I made up my mind to escape ; and the very first night, sirs, by God’s help I did it, and went southward away into the forest, avoiding the tracks of the Cimaroons, till I came to an Indian town. And there, gentlemen, I got more mercy from heathens than ever I had from Christians ; for when they found that I

was no Spaniard, they fed me and gave me a house and a wife (and a good wife she was to me), and painted me all over in patterns, as you see.

“One night, after we were all lain down, came a noise outside the town, and I, starting up, saw armed men and calivers shining in the moonlight. What do the villains but let fly right into the town with their calivers, and then rush in, sword in hand, killing pell-mell all they met; one of which shots, gentlemen, passing through the doorway, and close by me, struck my poor wife to the heart, that she never spoke word more. Well, gentlemen, they dragged me out, and all the young men and women, and chained us together by the neck; and so marched us all off for slaves, leaving the old folk and the wounded to die at leisure.

“But when morning came, and they knew by my skin that I was no Indian, and by my speech that I was no Spaniard, they began threatening me with torments, till I confessed that I was an Englishman, and one of Oxenham’s crew. At that says the leader, ‘Then you shall to Lima, to hang by the side of your captain, the pirate;’ by which I first knew that my poor captain was certainly gone. But, alas for me! the priest steps in and claims me for a heretic; and so, to make short a sad story, to the Inquisition at Carthagená I went, where what I suffered, gentlemen, were as disgustful for you to hear as unmanly for me to complain of.

“I was sentenced to the galleys for seven years; and it fell out, by God’s mercy, that my next comrade was an Englishman like myself, a young man of Bristol, who, as he told me, had been some manner of factor on board poor Captain Barker’s ship, and had been a preacher among the Anabaptists here in England. Seeing me altogether despairing and furious, like a wild

beast in a pit, he set before me in secret earnestly the sweet promises of God in Christ—who says, ‘Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you; and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’

“After a three or four months, when I had been all that while in sweet converse with him, there came one night to the barranco at Lima, where we were kept when on shore, three of the Holy Office, and carried him off without a word. They left me aboard the galley for a few months more (that was a whole voyage to Panama and back). But when we came back to Lima, the officers came on board again, and said to me, ‘That heretic has confessed naught against you; but because you have been seen talking with him so much, you are adjudged to the galleys for the rest of your life in perpetual servitude.’

“Well, gentlemen, when I heard that I must end my days in that galley, I was for a while like a madman; but in a day or two it was revealed to me (I speak the truth, gentlemen, before Heaven) that now I had been tried to the uttermost, and that my deliverance was at hand.

“And all the way up to Panama (that was after we had laden the *Cacafuogo*) I cast in my mind how to escape, and found no way; but just as I was beginning to lose heart again, a door was opened by the Lord’s own hand: for (I know not why) we were marched across from Panama to Nombre—which had never happened before—and there put all together into a great barranco close by the quay-side, shackled, as is the fashion, to one long bar that ran the whole length of the house. And the very first night that we were there, I, looking out of the window, spied, lying close aboard of

the quay, a good-sized caravel well armed and just loading for sea ; and the land breeze blew off very strong, so that the sailors were laying out a fresh warp to hold her to the shore. And it came into my mind that if we were aboard of her we should be at sea in five minutes ; and, looking at the quay, I saw all the soldiers who had guarded us scattered about drinking and gambling, and some going into taverns to refresh themselves after their journey. That was just at sundown ; and half an hour after in comes the gaoler, to take a last look at us for the night, and his keys at his girdle.

“ Whereon, sirs (whether by madness, or whether by the spirit which gave Samson strength to rend the lion), I rose against him as he passed me, without forethought or treachery of any kind, chained though I was, caught him by the head, and threw him there and then against the wall, that he never spoke word after ; and then with his keys freed myself and every soul in that room, and bid them follow me, vowing to kill any man who disobeyed my commands. They followed, as men astounded and leaping out of night into day, and death into life, and so aboard that caravel and out of the harbour, with no more hurt than a few chance shots from the soldiers on the quay.

“ Well, sirs, they chose me for captain, and a certain Genoese for lieutenant, and away to go. I would fain have gone ashore after all, and back to Panama to hear news of the little maid ; but that would have been but a fool’s errand. Some wanted to turn pirates ; but I, and the Genoese too, who was a prudent man though an evil one, persuaded them to run for England and get employment in the Netherland wars, assuring them that there would be no safety on the Spanish Main, when once our escape got wind. And the more part being of one

mind, for England we sailed, watering at the Barbados because it was desolate ; and so eastward toward the Canaries. In which voyage what we endured (being taken by long calms) by scurvy, calentures, hunger, and thirst, no tongue can tell.

“ And last of all, when we thought ourselves safe, we were wrecked by south-westerners on the coast of Brittany, near to Cape Race, from which but nine souls of us came ashore with their lives ; and so to Brest, where I found a Flushingier who carried me to Falmouth. And so ends my tale, in which if I have said one word more or less than truth, I can wish myself no worse than to have it all to undergo a second time.”

And his voice, as he finished, sank from very weariness of soul ; while Sir Richard sat opposite him in silence, his elbows on the table, his cheeks on his doubled fists, looking him through and through with kindling eyes, No one spoke for several minutes ; and then—

“ Amyas, you have heard this story. You believe it ? ”

“ Every word, sir, or I should not have the heart of a Christian man.”

“ So do I.—Anthony ! ”

The butler entered.

“ Take this man to the buttery ; clothe him comfortably, and feed him with the best ; and bid the knaves treat him as if he were their own father.”

But Yeo lingered.

“ If I might be so bold as to ask your worship a favour—— ”

“ Anything in reason, my brave fellow.”

“ If your worship could put me in the way of another adventure to the Indies ? ”

“ My good fellow, there are no adventures to the

Indies forward now ; but if you want to fight Spaniards, here is a gentleman will show you the way.—Amyas, take him with you to Ireland. If he has learnt half the lessons God has set him to learn, he ought to stand you in good stead.”

Yeo looked eagerly at the young giant.

“ Will you have me, sir ? There’s few matters I can’t turn my hand to ; and maybe you’ll be going to the Indies again some day, eh, and take me with you ? I’d serve your turn well, though I say it, either for gunner or for pilot. I know every stone and tree from Nombre to Panama, and all the ports of both the seas. You’ll never be content, I’ll warrant, till you’ve had another turn along the gold coasts, will you now ? ”

Amyas laughed and nodded, and the bargain was concluded.

So out went Yeo to eat ; and Amyas, having received his dispatches, got ready for his journey home.

“ Go the short way over the moors, lad. You must not lose an hour, but be ready to sail the moment the wind goes about.”

CHAPTER VI

A NOTABLE PRISONER

It was the blessed Christmas afternoon. The light was fading down ; the even-song was done ; and the good folks of Bideford were trooping home in merry groups. One lady only, wrapped close in her black muffler, and followed by her maid, walked swiftly, yet sadly, toward the long causeway and bridge which led to Northam town. Sir Richard Grenville and his wife caught her up and stopped her courteously.

"You will come home with us, Mrs. Leigh," said Lady Grenville, "and spend a pleasant Christmas night?"

Mrs. Leigh smiled sweetly, and, laying one hand on Lady Grenville's arm, pointed with the other to the westward, and said—

"I cannot well spend a merry Christmas night, while that sound is in my ears."

What was the sound that troubled Mrs. Leigh? It was dead calm. There was not a breath to stir a blade of grass. And yet the air was full of sound—a low, deep roar which hovered over down and wood, salt-marsh and river, like a roll of a thousand wheels, the tramp of endless armies, or—what it was—the thunder of a mighty surge upon the boulders of the pebble-ridge.

"The ridge is noisy to-night," said Sir Richard. "There has been wind somewhere."

"There is wind now, where my boy is, God help him!" said Mrs. Leigh; and all knew that she spoke truly. The spirit of the Atlantic storm had sent forward the token of his coming, in the smooth ground-swell which was heard inland, two miles away.

"God help my boy!" said Mrs. Leigh again.

"God is as near him by sea as by land," said good Sir Richard.

"True, but I am a lone mother, and one that has no heart just now but to go home and pray."

And so Mrs. Leigh went onward up the lane, and spent all that night in listening between her prayers to the thunder of the surge, till it was drowned, long ere the sun rose, in the thunder of the storm.

And where is Amyas on this afternoon?

Amyas is sitting bareheaded in a boat's stern in Smerwick Bay, with the spray whistling through his curls, as he shouts cheerfully—

“ Pull, and with a will, my merry men all, and never mind shipping a sea. Cannon balls are a cargo that don’t spoil by taking salt water.”

The short light of the winter day is fading fast. Along the sand-hills on the shore flash, in the evening gloom, red sparks which never came from heaven; for that fort, now christened by the invaders the Fort del Oro, where flaunts the hated golden flag of Spain, holds eight hundred of the foe; and but three nights ago Amyas and Yeo, and the rest of Winter’s shrewdest hands, slung four culverins out of the *Admiral’s* main deck, and floated them ashore, and dragged them up to the battery among the sand-hills; and now it shall be seen whether Spanish and Italian *condottieri* can hold their own on British ground against the men of Devon.

Small blame to Amyas if he was thinking, not of his lonely mother at Burrough Court, but of those quick, bright flashes on sand-hill and on fort, where Salvation Yeo was hurling the eighteen-pound shot with deadly aim, and watching with a cool and bitter smile of triumph the flying of the sand and the crashing of the gabions. Amyas and his party had been on board, at the risk of their lives, for a fresh supply of shot; for Winter’s battery was out of ball, and had been firing stones for the last four hours, in default of better missiles. They ran the boat on shore through the surf, where a cove in the shore made landing possible, and, almost careless whether she stove or not, scrambled over the sand-hills with each man his brace of shot slung across his shoulder; and Amyas, leaping into the trenches, shouted cheerfully to Salvation Yeo—

“ More food for the bulldogs, gunner, and plums for the Spaniards’ Christmas pudding ! ”

“ Don’t speak to a man at his business, Master

Amyas. Five mortal times have I missed ; but I will have that rag down, as I'm a sinner."

"Down with it then ; nobody wants you to shoot crooked."

And once again Yeo's eighteen-pounder roared, and away. And, oh glory ! the great yellow flag of Spain, which streamed in the gale, lifted clean into the air, flag-staff and all, and then pitched wildly down headforemost, far to leeward.

A hurrah from the sailors, answered by the soldiers of the opposite camp, shook the very cloud above them ; but ere its echoes had died away, a tall officer leapt upon the parapet of the fort, with the fallen flag in his hand, and, rearing it as well as he could upon his lance point, held it firmly against the gale, while the fallen flagstaff was raised again within.

In a moment a dozen long-bows were bent at the daring foeman ; but Amyas behind shouted—

"Shame, lads ! Stop, and let the gallant gentleman have due courtesy !"

So they stopped, while Amyas, springing on the rampart of the battery, took off his hat and bowed to the flagholder, who, as soon as relieved of his charge, returned the bow courteously, and descended.

It was by this time all but dark, and the firing began to slacken on all sides. Salvation and his brother gunners, having covered up their slaughtering tackle with tarpaulins, retired for the night, leaving Amyas, who had volunteered to take the watch till midnight ; and the rest of the force, having got their scanty supper of biscuit (for provisions were running very short), lay down under arms among the sand-hills, and grumbled themselves to sleep.

On passed the dull hours, till it might be past eleven



‘Mr. Oxenham led the lady, and I carried the little maid’—Page 33

o'clock, and all lights were out in the battery and the shipping, and there was no sound of living thing but the monotonous tramp of the two sentinels beside him, and now and then a grunt from the party who slept under arms some twenty yards to the rear.

So he paced to and fro, looking carefully out now and then over the strip of sand-hill which lay between him and the fort ; but all was blank and black, and, moreover, it began to rain furiously.

Suddenly he seemed to hear a rustle among the harsh sand-grass. Amyas stopped, crouched down beside a gun, and laid his ear to the rampart, whereby he heard clearly, as he thought, the noise of approaching feet. He was rewarded in a minute or two by hearing something gently deposited against the mouth of the embrasure, which, by the noise, should be a piece of timber.

"So far, so good," said he to himself ; "when the scaling ladder is up, the soldier follows, I suppose. I can only humbly thank them for giving my embrasure the preference. There he comes ! I hear his feet scuffling."

He could hear plainly enough some one working himself into the mouth of the embrasure ; but the plague was, that it was so dark that he could not see his hand between him and the sky, much less his foe at two yards off. However, he made a pretty fair guess as to the whereabouts, and, rising softly, discharged such a blow downwards as would have split a yule log. A volley of sparks flew up from the hapless Spaniard's armour, and a grunt issued from within it, which proved that, whether he was killed or not, the blow had not improved his respiration.

Amyas felt for his head, seized it, dragged him over the gun, sprang into the embrasure on his knees, felt for

the top of the ladder, found it, hove it clean off and out, with four or five men on it, and then, of course, tumbled after it ten feet into the sand, roaring like a town bull to her Majesty's liege subjects in general.

Sailor-fashion, he had no armour on but a light morion and a cuirass, so he was not too much encumbered to prevent his springing to his legs instantly, and setting to work, cutting and foining right and left at every sound, for sight there was none ; while the company above, finding it much too dark to attempt a counter sortie, opened a smart fire of musketry and arrows on things in general.

Suddenly the moon clears ; and, with one more fierce volley, the English sailors, seeing the confusion, leap down from the embrasures, and to it pell-mell.

Amyas is now in his element, and so are the brave fellows at his heels ; and there are ten breathless, furious minutes among the sand-hills ; and then the trumpets blow a recall, and the sailors drop back again by twos and threes, and are helped up into the embrasures over many a dead and dying foe ; while the guns of Fort del Oro open on them, and blaze away for half an hour without reply ; and then all is still once more.

Twenty minutes after, Winter and the captains who were on shore were drying themselves round a peat-fire on the beach, and talking over the skirmish, when a friend of Amyas Leigh's asked—

“Where is Leigh ? Who has seen him ? I am sadly afraid he has gone too far, and been slain.”

“Slain ? Never less, gentlemen !” replied the voice of the very person in question, as he stalked out of the darkness into the glare of the fire, and shot down from his shoulders into the midst of the ring, as he might a sack of corn, a huge, dark body, which was gradually seen to

be a man in rich armour ; who, being so shot down, lay quietly where he was dropped, with his feet (luckily for him mailed) in the fire.

“Take the gentleman to my tent,” said Winter, “and let the surgeon see to him.—Mr. Leigh, who is he?”

“An enemy, but whether Spaniard or Italian, I know not ; but he seemed somebody among them—I thought the captain of a company. He and I cut at each other twice or thrice at first, and then lost each other ; and after that I came on him among the sand-hills, trying to rally his men, and swearing like the mouth of the pit, whereby I guess him a Spaniard. But his men ran ; so I brought him in.”

Next morning, Amyas was called to the Admiral’s tent. “We all owe you thanks for last night’s service, sir,” said Winter. “Your prisoner is found to be a gentleman of birth and experience, and the leader of the assault last night. He has already told us more than we had hoped, for which also we are beholden to you ; and, indeed, my Lord Grey has been asking for you already.”

“I have, young sir,” said a quiet and lofty voice ; and Amyas saw limping from the inner tent the proud and stately figure of the Deputy, Lord Grey of Wilton.

“I have been asking for you, having heard from many both of your last night’s prowess and of your conduct and courage beyond the promise of your years, displayed in that ever-memorable voyage, which may well be ranked with the deeds of the ancient Argonauts.”

Amyas bowed low, and the Lord-Deputy went on : “You will needs wish to see your prisoner. You will find him such a one as you need not be ashamed to have taken, and as need not be ashamed to have been taken by you ; but here he is, and will, I doubt not, answer as much for himself. Know each other better,

gentlemen both ; last night was an ill one for making acquaintances. Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto, know the hidalgo, Amyas Leigh."

As he spoke, the Spaniard came forward, still in his armour, all save his head, which was bound up in a handkerchief.

He was an exceedingly tall and graceful personage, golden-haired and fair-skinned, with hands as small and white as a woman's ; his lips were delicate, but thin, and compressed closely at the corners of the mouth ; and his pale blue eye had a glassy dullness. In spite of his beauty and his carriage, Amyas shrank from him instinctively ; and yet he could not help holding out his hand in return, as the Spaniard, holding out his, said languidly, in most sweet and sonorous Spanish—

"I kiss his hands and feet. The señor speaks, I am told, my native tongue ?"

"I have that honour."

"Then accept in it (for I can better express myself therein than in English, though I am not altogether ignorant of that witty and learned language) the expression of my pleasure at having fallen into the hands of one so renowned in war and travel."

Honest Amyas bowed and stammered, a little thrown off his balance by the unexpected assurance and cool flattery of his prisoner ; but he said—

"If you are satisfied, illustrious señor, I am bound to be so. Pardon me, señor ; but by this daylight I should have seen that armour before."

"I doubt it not, señor, as having been yourself also in the forefront of the battle," said the Spaniard, with a proud smile.

"If I am right, señor, you are he who yesterday held up the standard after it was shot down."

"I do not deny that undeserved honour; and I have to thank the courtesy of you and your countrymen for having permitted me to do so with impunity."

"Ah, I heard of that brave feat," said the Lord-Deputy. "You should consider yourself, Mr. Leigh, honoured by being enabled to show courtesy to such a warrior."

Accordingly, after the surrender of Fort del Oro, Amyas had Don Guzman duly adjudged to him, as his prize by right of war. The question was, where to bestow him till his ransom should arrive; and as Amyas could not well deliver the gallant Don into the safe custody of Mrs. Leigh at Burrough, he was fain to write to Sir Richard Grenville and ask his advice, and in the meanwhile keep the Spaniard with him upon parole, which he frankly gave.

At last came a letter from Sir Richard Grenville, complimenting Amyas on his success, bearing a long and courtly message to Don Guzman (whom Grenville had known when he was in the Mediterranean), and offering to receive him as his own guest at Bideford, till his ransom should arrive—a proposition which the Spaniard could not but gladly accept; and one of Winter's ships, returning to England in the spring of 1581, delivered duly at the quay of Bideford the body of Don Guzman.

During his residence at Bideford, Don Guzman fell in love with Rose Salterne, daughter of the Mayor, and called, from her great beauty, the "Rose of Torridge." She had many suitors. Indeed, both Amyas Leigh and his elder brother, Frank, who was an accomplished scholar and courtier, were in love with her; but their love was a noble passion, which bound them in closer brotherhood than ever. Don Guzman was the suitor whom Rose favoured; and in 1583, when his ransom

arrived, and also the news of his appointment as Governor of La Guayra, he persuaded Rose, now that he was free, to elope with him. They were married by a Roman Catholic priest on Lundy Island, and then sailed away in a Portuguese ship, first of all to Lisbon, and thence to La Guayra. A North Devon woman named Lucy Passmore, who had the reputation about Bideford of being a "white witch," and who had assisted the secret interviews of the two lovers, went with them, as Rose's attendant. They were followed by a cousin of Amyas's named Eustace Leigh, a young man who had, at one time, been one of the many suitors of the Rose of Torridge, but who was now destined for the Jesuit priesthood.

A vessel called the *Rose* was equipped at the expense, mainly, of the wealthy Mayor of Bideford. Aboard of this, Amyas Leigh, as Captain, his brother Frank, and their close friend, Will Cary, of Clovelly Court, a young gentleman who was yet another of Rose's admirers, set sail from Bideford Quay on the fifteenth of November, 1583. They had a crew of a hundred men, and the vessel was remarkably well provided with weapons of war. Salvation Yeo went with them as gunner; and Jack Brimblecombe, an old schoolfellow of Amyas's, who had taken deacon's orders, was appointed ship's chaplain. The purpose of the expedition was, if possible, to restore the eloped lady to her sorrow-stricken father.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THEY CAME TO BARBADOS

Land ! land ! land ! Yes, there it was, far away to the south and west, beside the setting sun, a long blue bar between the crimson sea and golden sky. Land at last, with fresh streams and cooling fruits, and free room for cramped and scurvy-weakened limbs.

"That should be Barbados, your worship," said the sailing master, Robert Drew by name, "unless my reckoning is far out, which, Heaven knows, it has no right to be, after such a passage, and God be praised."

"Barbados ? I never heard of it."

"Very like, sir ; but Yeo and I were here with Captain Drake. There is good harbourage to the south and west of it, I remember."

"And neither Spaniard, cannibal, or other evil beast," said Yeo—"a very garden of the Lord, sir, hid away in the seas, for an inheritance to those who love Him."

"What say you, my masters ?" asked Amyas. "How can we do better than to spend a few days here, to get our sick round, before we make the Main, and set to our work ?"

All approved the counsel except Frank, who was silent.

"Come, fellow-adventurer," said Cary, "we must have your voice too."

"To my impatience, Will," said he, aside in a low voice, "there is but one place on earth, and I am all day longing for wings to fly thither ; but the counsel is right. I approve it."

So the verdict was announced, and received with

a hearty cheer by the crew ; and long before morning they had run along the southern shore of the island, and were feeling their way into the bay where Bridgetown now stands.

At last the ship stopped ; at last the cable rattled through the hawsehole ; and then, careless of the chance of lurking Spaniard or Carib, an instinctive cheer burst from every throat. Poor fellows ! Amyas had much ado to prevent them going on shore at once, dark as it was, by reminding them that it wanted but two hours of day.

At dawn, the sick were lifted over the side, and landed boat-load after boat-load on the beach, to stretch themselves in the shade of the palms ; and in half an hour the whole crew were scattered on the shore, except some dozen worthy men, who had volunteered to keep watch and ward on board till noon.

And now the first instinctive cry of nature was for fruit ! fruit ! fruit ! The poor lame wretches crawled from place to place, plucking greedily the violet grapes of the creeping shore vine, and staining their mouths and blistering their lips with the prickly pears, in spite of Yeo's entreaties and warnings against the thorns. Some of the healthy began hewing down cocoa-nut trees to get at the nuts, doing little thereby but blunt their hatchets ; till Yeo and Drew, having mustered half a dozen reasonable men, went off inland, and returned in an hour laden with the dainties of that primeval orchard.

Amyas and his brother wandered on together through the glorious tropic woods, and then returned to the beach to find the sick already grown cheerful, and many who that morning could not stir from their hammocks pacing up and down, and gaining strength with every step.

“ Well done, lads ! ” cried Amyas ; “ keep a cheerful mind. We will have the music ashore after dinner, and those that can dance may.”

And so those four days were spent ; and the men, like schoolboys on a holiday, gave themselves up to simple merriment, not forgetting, however, to wash the clothes, take in fresh water, and store up a good supply of such fruits as seemed likely to keep.

Then off again to the westward, unconscious pioneers of all the wealth, and commerce, and beauty, and science, which have in later centuries made that lovely isle the richest gem of all the tropic seas !

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT BEFELL AT LA GUAYRA

They slipped past the southern point of Grenada in the night, and were at last within that fairy ring of islands on which Nature had concentrated all her beauty, and man all his sin. If Barbados had been invested in the eyes of the newcomers with some strange glory, how much more the seas on which they now entered, which smile in almost perpetual calm, untouched by the hurricane that roars past them far to northward !

They ran south-west across the mouth of that great bay which stretches from the peninsula of Paria to Cape Codera. Yeo and Drew knew every foot of the way, and had good reason to know it ; for they, the first of all English mariners, had tried to trade along this coast with Hawkins. And now, right ahead, sheer out of the sea from base to peak, arose higher and higher the mighty range of the Caraccas Mountains, beside which all hills which most of the crew had ever seen seemed petty mounds. Soon the sea became rough

and chopping, though the breeze was fair and gentle ; and ere they were abreast of the cape, they became aware of that strong eastward current which, during the winter months, so often baffles the mariner who wishes to go to the westward. All night long they struggled through the billows, with the huge wall of Cape Codera a thousand feet above their heads to the left, and beyond it again, bank upon bank of mountain, bathed in the yellow moonlight.

Westward ho they ran, beneath the highest cliff on earth, some seven thousand feet of rock, parted from the sea by a narrow strip of bright green lowland. Here and there a patch of sugar-cane, or a knot of cocoanut trees, close to the water's edge, reminded them that they were in the tropics ; but, above, all was savage, rough, and bare as an Alpine precipice.

And now the last point is rounded, and they are full in sight of the spot in quest of which they have sailed four thousand miles of sea. A low black cliff, crowned by a wall, a battery at either end. Within, a few narrow streets of white houses, running parallel with the sea, upon a strip of flat, which seemed not two hundred yards in breadth ; and, behind, the mountain wall, covering the whole in deepest shade. How that wall was ever ascended to the inland seemed the puzzle ; but Drew, who had been off the place before, pointed out to them a narrow path, which wound upwards through a glen, seemingly sheer perpendicular. That was the road to the capital, if any man dare try it.

Where was the harbour ? There was none. Only an open roadstead, wherein lay tossing at anchor five vessels. The two outer ones were small merchant caravels. Behind them lay two long, low, ugly-looking craft, at sight of which Yeo gave a long whew.

"Galleys, as I'm a sinful saint ! And what's that big one inside of them, Robert Drew ? She has more than hawseholes in her black sides, I think."

"We shall open her astern of the galleys in another minute," said Amyas. "Look out, Cary ; your eyes are better than mine."

"Six round portholes on the main deck," quoth Will.

"And I can see the brass patararoes glittering on her poop," quoth Amyas. "Will, we're in for it."

"In for it we are, captain."

"Let us hold a council of war, at all events, Frank," said Amyas.

Frank was absorbed in a very different matter. A half mile to the eastward of the town, two or three hundred feet up the steep mountain side, stood a large, low, white house embosomed in trees and gardens. There was no other house of similar size near—no place for one. And was not that the royal flag of Spain which flaunted before it ? That must be the governor's house ; that must be the abode of the Rose of Torridge ! And Frank stood devouring it with wild eyes, till he had persuaded himself that he could see a woman's figure walking upon the terrace in front, and that the figure was none other than hers whom he sought. Amyas could hardly tear him away to a council of war.

While this was being held, the sun plunged into the sea, and all was dark.

At last it was agreed to anchor, and wait till midnight. If the ships of war came out, they were to try to run in past them, and, desperate as the attempt might be, attempt their original plan of landing to the westward of the town, taking it in flank, plundering the government store-houses, which they saw close to the landing-place, and then fighting their way back to their

boats, and out of the roadstead. Two hours would suffice, if the armada and the galleys were but once out of the way.

The night wore on, and there was no sign of stir among the shipping ; for though they could not see the vessels themselves, yet their lights (easily distinguished by their relative height from those in the town above) remained motionless ; and the men fretted and fumed for weary hours, at thus seeing a rich prize (for, of course, the town was paved with gold) within arm's reach, and yet impossible.

But though a venture on the town was impossible, yet there was another venture which Frank was unwilling to let slip. A light which now shone brightly in one of the windows of the governor's house was the lode-star to which all his thoughts were turned ; and as he sat in the cabin with Amyas, Cary, and Jack, he opened his heart to them.

"And are we, then," asked he mournfully, "to go without doing the very thing for which we came ?"

"What would you do, then ?"

"Go up to that house, Amyas, and speak with her, if Heaven gives me an opportunity, as Heaven, I feel assured, will give."

"Some one must go with you, Frank," said Amyas, "if it were only to bring back the boat's crew in case—" And he faltered.

"In case I fall," replied Frank, with a smile. "I will finish your sentence for you, lad ; I am not afraid of it, though you may be for me. Yet some one, I fear, must go. Unhappy me, that I cannot risk my own worthless life without risking your more precious lives !"

They drew lots to decide who should go, and the lot fell upon Amyas Leigh.

Amyas went on deck, and asked for six volunteers. Whosoever would come, Amyas would double out of his own purse any prize-money which might fall to that man's share.

The crew was quickly made up; but ere they pushed off, Amyas called Cary aside.

"If I perish, Will——"

"Don't talk of such things, dear old lad."

"I must. Then you are captain. Do nothing without Yeo and Drew."

Cary pressed Amyas's hand, and watched the two brothers down over the side upon their desperate errand.

They reached the pebble beach. There seemed no difficulty about finding the path to the house—so bright was the moon, and so careful a survey of the place had Frank taken. Leaving the men with the boat (Amyas had taken care that they should be well armed), they started up the beach, with their swords only. Frank assured Amyas that they would find a path leading from the beach up to the house, and he was not mistaken. They found it easily, for it was made of white shell sand; and, following it, struck into a belt of tall thorny cactuses. Through this the path wound in zigzags up a steep rocky slope, and ended at a wicket-gate. They tried it, and found it open; so they went up through it, along a smooth turf walk, into what seemed a pleasure-garden, and arrived in front of the house.

It was, as I have said, a long, low house, with balconies along the upper story, and the under part mostly open to the wind. The light was still burning in the window.

"Whither now?" said Amyas, in a tone of desperate resignation.

"Thither! Where else on earth?" And Frank

pointed to the light, trembling from head to foot, and pushed on.

“For Heaven’s sake ! Look at the negroes on the barbecu !”

It was indeed time to stop ; for on the barbecu, which ran all round the front, lay sleeping full twenty black figures.

“What will you do now ? You must step over them to gain an entrance.”

“Wait here, and I will go up gently towards the window. She may see me. She will see me as I step into the moonlight.”

The light above was extinguished.

“Did you see her ?” whispered Frank.

“No.”

“I did—the shadow of the face and the neck ! Can I be mistaken ?”

There was a few minutes’ silence.

“Look !” then exclaimed Frank. And he caught Amyas’s arm, and clinched it tight.

For round the farther corner of the house a dark-cloaked figure stole gently, turning a look now and then upon the sleeping negroes, and came on right towards them. The shape and the walk were exactly those of her, to find whom they had crossed the Atlantic.

But what was that behind her ? Her shadow against the white wall of the house ? Not so. Another figure, cloaked likewise, but taller far, was following on her steps. It was a man’s.

The Rose (if indeed it was she) was within ten yards of them, when she perceived that she was followed. She gave a little shriek. The cavalier sprang forward, lifted his hat courteously, and joined her, bowing low. The moonlight was full upon his face.

"It is Eustace, our cousin ! How came he here ?"

"Eustace ! Then that is she after all !" said Frank, forgetting everything else in her.

The two came on, talking earnestly, and walking at a slow pace, so that the brothers could hear every word.

"What shall we do now ?" said Frank. "We have no right to be eavesdroppers."

"But we must be, right or none." And Amyas held him down firmly by the arm.

"But whither are you going, then, my dear madam ?" they heard Eustace say in a wheedling tone. "Can you wonder if such strange conduct should cause at least sorrow to your admirable and faithful husband ? The inestimable Señor Don Guzman ——"

"What do you mean by praising him to me in this fulsome way, sir ? Do you suppose that I do not know his virtues better than you ?"

"If you do, madam" (this was spoken in a harder tone), "it were wise for you to try them less severely, than by wandering down towards the beach on the very night that you know his most deadly enemies are lying in wait to slay him, plunder his house, and most probably to carry you off from him."

"Carry me off ? I will die first !"

"Who can prove that to him ? Appearances are at least against you."

"My love to him, and his trust for me, sir !"

"His trust ? Have you forgotten, madam, what passed last week, and why he sailed yesterday ?"

The only answer was a burst of tears. Eustace stood watching her with a terrible eye ; but they could see his face writhing in the moonlight.

"Oh !" sobbed she at last. "And if I have been

imprudent, was it not natural to wish to look once more upon an English ship ? Are you not English as well as I ? Have you no longing recollections of the dear old land at home ? ”

Eustace was silent, but his face worked more fiercely than ever.

“ How can he ever know it ? ”

“ Why should he not know it ? ”

“ Ah ! ” she burst out passionately, “ why not, indeed, while you are here—you, sir, the sunderer of loving hearts ? ”

Drawing close to her, he whispered in her ear—what, the brothers heard not ; but her answer was a shriek which rang through the woods, and sent the night-birds fluttering up from every bough above their heads.

“ By Heaven ! ” said Amyas, “ I can stand this no longer. Cut that villain’s throat I must—— ”

“ She is lost, if his dead body is found by her.”

“ We are lost, if we stay here, then,” said Amyas ; “ for those negroes will hurry down at her cry, and then found we must be.”

“ Are you mad, madam, to betray yourself by your own cries ? The negroes will be here in a moment. I give you one last chance for life then.” And Eustace shouted in Spanish at the top of his voice, “ Help, help, servants ! Your mistress is being carried off by bandits ! ”

“ What do you mean, sir ? ”

“ Let your woman’s wit supply the rest ; and forget not him who thus saves you from disgrace.”

Whether the brothers heard the last words or not, I know not ; but, taking for granted that Eustace had discovered them, they sprang to their feet at once, determined to make one last appeal, and then to sell their lives as dearly as they could.

Eustace started back at the unexpected apparition ; but a second glance showed him Amyas's mighty bulk, and he spoke calmly—

" You see, madam, I did not call without need. Welcome, good cousins. My charity, as you perceive, has found means to outstrip your craft ; while the fair lady, as was but natural, has been true to her assignation ! "

Amyas burst through the bushes at him. There was no time to be lost ; and ere the giant could disentangle himself from the boughs and shrubs, Eustace had slipped off his long cloak, thrown it over Amyas's head, and ran up the alley, shouting for help.

Mad with rage, Amyas gave chase, but in two minutes more Eustace was safe among the ranks of the negroes, who came shouting and jabbering down the path.

He rushed back. Frank was just ending some wild appeal to Rose.

" Your conscience ! your religion—— "

" No, never ! I can face the chance of death, but not the loss of him. Go ! For God's sake leave me ! "

" You are lost, then, and I have ruined you ! "

" Come off, now or never, " cried Amyas, clutching him by the arm, and dragging him away like a child.

" You forgive me ? " cried he.

" Forgive you ? " And she burst into tears again.

Frank burst into tears also.

" Let me go back and die with her. " And he struggled to turn back.

Amyas looked back too, and saw her standing calmly, with her hands folded across her breast, awaiting Eustace and the servants ; and he half turned to go back also. Both saw how fearfully appearances had put her into Eustace's power. Had he not a right to suspect that

they were there by her appointment—that she was going to escape with them ? And would not Eustace use his power ? The thought of the Inquisition crossed their minds. “ Was that the threat which Eustace had whispered ? ” asked he of Frank.

“ It was,” groaned Frank in answer.

For the first and last time in his life, Amyas Leigh stood irresolute.

“ Back, and stab her to the heart first ! ” said Frank, struggling to escape from him.

See ! the negroes were up with her now—past her—away for life ! And once more he dragged his brother down the hill, and through the wicket, only just in time ; for the negroes were within ten yards of them.

“ Frank,” said he sharply, “ if you ever hope to see your mother again, rouse yourself, man, and fight ! ” And, without waiting for an answer, he turned, and charged uphill upon his pursuers, who saw the long bright blade, and fled instantly.

Again he hurried Frank down the hill. The path wound in zigzags, and he feared that the negroes would come straight over the cliff, and so cut off his retreat ; but the prickly cactuses were too much for them, and they were forced to follow by the path, while the brothers (Frank having somewhat regained his senses) turned every now and then to menace them. But, once on the rocky path, stones began to fly fast—small ones fortunately, and wide and wild for want of light. But when they reached the pebble-beach ? Both were too proud to run ; but, if ever Amyas prayed in his life, he prayed for the last twenty yards before he reached the water-mark.

“ Now, Frank ! down to the boat as hard as you can run, while I keep the curs back.”

"Amyas ! what do you take me for ? My madness brought you hither ; your devotion shall not bring me back without you."

"Together, then !"

And putting Frank's arm through his, they hurried down, shouting to their men.

The boat was not fifty yards off ; but fast travelling over the pebbles was impossible, and long ere half the distance was crossed, the negroes were on the beach, and the storm burst. A volley of great quartz pebbles whistled round their heads.

"Come on, Frank, for life's sake !—Men, to the rescue ! Ah, what was that ?"

The dull crash of a pebble against Frank's fair head ! He sank on Amyas's arm. The giant threw him over his shoulder, and plunged blindly on—himself struck again and again.

"Fire, men ! Give it the black villains !"

The arquebuses crackled from the boat in front. What were those dull thuds which answered from behind ? Echoes ? No. Over his head the caliver-balls went screeching. The governor's guard have turned out, followed them to the beach, fixed their calivers, and are firing over the negroes' heads, as the savages rush down upon the hapless brothers.

Amyas is up to his knees in water—battered with stones—blinded with blood. The boat is swaying off and on against the steep pebble-bank : he clutches at it—misses—falls headlong—rises half choked with water ; but Frank is still in his arms. Another heavy blow—a confused roar of shouts, shots, curses—a confused mass of negroes and English, foam and pebbles—and he recollects no more.

* * * * *

He is lying in the stern-sheets of the boat, stiff, weak, half blind with blood. He looks up. The moon is still bright overhead ; but they are away from the shore now, for the wave-crests are dancing white before the land breeze, high above the boat's side. The boat seems strangely empty. Two men are pulling instead of six ! And what is this lying heavy across his chest ? He pushes, and is answered by a groan. He puts his hand down to rise, and is answered by another groan.

"What's this ?"

"All that are left of us," says Simon Evans of Clovelly.

"All ?" The bottom of the boat seemed paved with human bodies. "O God ! O God !" moans Amyas, trying to rise. "And where—where is Frank ? Frank !"

"Mr. Frank !" cries Evans. There is no answer.

"Dead ?" shrieks Amyas. "Look for him—for God's sake, look !" And, struggling from under his living load, he peers into each pale and bleeding face.

"Where is he ? Why don't you speak, forward there !"

"Because we have naught to say, sir," answers Evans, almost surlily.

Frank was not there.

"Put the boat about ! To the shore !" roars Amyas.

"Look over the gunwale, and judge for yourself, sir !"

The waves are leaping fierce and high before a furious land breeze. Return is impossible.

"Cowards ! villains ! traitors ! hounds ! to have left him behind."

"Listen you to me, Captain Amyas Leigh," says

Simon Evans, resting on his oar, "and hang me for mutiny, if you will, when we're aboard, if we ever get there. Isn't it enough to bring us out to death (as you knew yourself, sir, for you're prudent enough) to please that poor young gentleman's fancy about a wench, but you must call coward an honest man that have saved your life this night, and not one of us but has his wound to show?"

Amyas was silent; the rebuke was just.

"I tell you, sir, if we've hove a stone out of this boat since we got off, we've hove two hundredweight; and if the Lord had not fought for us, she'd have been beat to noggin-staves there on the beach."

"How did I come here, then?"

"Tom Hart dragged you in out of five feet water, and then thrust the boat off, and had his brains beat out for reward. All were knocked down but us two. So help me God, we thought that you had hove Mr. Frank on board just as you were knocked down, and saw William Frost drag him in."

But William Frost was lying senseless in the bottom of the boat. There was no explanation. After all, none was needed.

"And I have three wounds from stones, and this man behind me as many more, besides a shot through his shoulder. Now, sir, be we cowards?"

"You have done your duty," said Amyas, and sank down in the boat, and cried as if his heart would break; and then sprang up, and, wounded as he was, took the oar from Evans's hands. With weary work they made the ship, but so exhausted that another boat had to be lowered to get them alongside.

The alarm being now given, it was hardly safe to remain where they were; and, after a stormy and sad

argument, it was agreed to weigh anchor and stand off and on till morning ; for Amyas refused to leave the spot till he was compelled, though he had no hope (how could he have ?) that Frank might still be alive.

CHAPTER IX

ONE BROTHER LOST, BUT FOURSORE GAINED

When the sun leaped up the next morning, and the tropic night flashed suddenly into the tropic day, Amyas was pacing the deck, with dishevelled hair and torn clothes, his eyes red with rage and weeping, his heart full. How can I describe it ? Picture it to yourselves, picture it to yourselves, you who have ever lost a brother ; and you who have not, thank God that you know nothing of his agony. Full of impossible projects, he strode and staggered up and down, as the ship thrashed close-hauled through the rolling seas.

Amyas presently found that the *Rose* was pursued by the three vessels which he had seen yesterday off Guayra—a war-ship and two galleys. When these came alongside, a fiercely contested sea-fight ensued. The *Rose* came off victorious indeed, but so badly damaged, having received five shot between wind and water, and one below, that it became necessary to run inshore. The vessel's head was put toward the land ; but when she began to slip through the water, the leak increased so fast that the men were kept hard at work at the pumps for the rest of the afternoon.

The current at length brought them abreast of the bay of Higuerote. Right ahead of them to the south, the shore sank suddenly into a low line of mangrove wood, backed by primeval forest. As they ran inward, all eyes

were strained greedily to find some opening in the mangrove belt; but none was to be seen for some time. The lead was kept going, and every fresh heave announced shallower water.

"We shall have very shoal work off those mangroves, Yeo," said Amyas. "I doubt whether we shall do aught now, unless we find a river's mouth."

"If the Lord thinks a river good for us, sir, He'll show us one." So on they went, keeping a south-east course, and at last an opening in the mangrove belt was hailed with a cheer from the older hands, though the majority shrugged their shoulders, as men going open-eyed to destruction.

Off the mouth they sent in Drew and Cary with a boat, and watched anxiously for an hour. The boat returned with a good report of two fathoms of water over the bar, impenetrable forests for two miles up, the river sixty yards broad, and no sign of man. The river's banks were soft and sloping mud, fit for careening.

"Safe quarters, sir," said Yeo privately, "as far as Spaniards go. I hope in God it may be as safe from calentures and fevers."

"Beggars must not be choosers," said Amyas. So in they went.

They towed the ship up about half a mile to a point where she could not be seen from the seaward, and there moored her to the mangrove stems. Amyas ordered a boat out, and went up the river himself to reconnoitre. He rowed some three miles, till the river narrowed suddenly, and was all but covered in by the interlacing boughs of mighty trees. There was no sign that man had been there since the making of the world.

That night every man of the boat's crew, save Amyas, was down with raging fever; before ten the next

morning, five more men were taken, and others sickening fast.

Amyas called a council of war, or rather a sanitary commission, in the course of the morning.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we cannot stay here to die. We must leave the ship and go inland."

It was agreed to go, and by sunset that evening they had gained a level spot, a full thousand feet above the sea, backed by an inaccessible cliff, which formed the upper shoulder of a mighty mountain, defended below by steep wooded slopes, and needing but the felling of a few trees to make it impregnable.

Amyas settled the sick under the arched roots of an enormous cottonwood tree, and made a second journey to the ship, to bring up hammocks and blankets for them ; while Yeo's wisdom and courage were of inestimable value. He, as pioneer, had found the little brook up which they forced their way ; he had encouraged them to climb the cliffs over which it fell, arguing rightly that on its course they were sure to find some ground fit for encampment within reach of water ; he had supported Amyas, when again and again the weary crew entreated to be dragged no farther, and had gone back again a dozen times to cheer them upward ; while Cary, who brought up the rear, bullied and jeered on the stragglers who sat down and refused to move, drove back at the sword's point more than one who was beating a retreat, carried their burdens for them, sang them songs on the halt—in all things approving himself the gallant and hopeful soul which he had always been ; till Amyas, beside himself with joy at finding that the two men on whom he had counted most were utterly worthy of his trust, went so far as to whisper to them both, in confidence, that very night—

"Cortes burnt his ships, when he landed. Why should not we?"

Yeo leapt upright; and then sat down again, and whispered—

"Do you say that, captain? 'Tis from above then—that's certain; for it's been hanging on my mind, too, all day."

"There's no hurry," quoth Amyas; "we must clear her out first, you know," while Cary sat silent and musing.

In that mountain nook the party spent some ten days and more. Several of the sick men died; the others mended steadily, by the help of certain herbs which Yeo administered.

At length, Amyas got his men together, and clearly and forcibly explained that the only hope now left to them, either of safety or of treasure, was in making for the River Orinoco. After some not unnatural hesitation, the Captain's plan was accepted.

"This," said Amyas, "is indeed the proudest day of my life. I have lost one brother, but I have gained fourscore. God do so to me and more also, if I do not deal with you according to the trust which you have put in me this day!"

So underneath that giant ceiba tree, those valiant men, reduced by battle and sickness to some eighty, swore a great oath, and kept that oath like men—to search for the Golden City for two full years to come, whatever might befall; to stand to each other for weal or woe; to obey their officers to the death; to murmur privately against no man, but bring all complaints to a council of war; to use no profane oaths, but serve God daily with prayer; to take by violence from no man, save from their natural enemies the Spaniards; to be civil

and merciful to all savages, and courteous to all women ; to bring all booty and all food into the common stock, and observe to the utmost their faith with the adventurers who had fitted out the ship ; and, finally, to march at sunrise the next morning toward the south, trusting in God to be their guide.

* * * * *

The Cross stands upright in the southern sky. It is the middle of the night. Cary and Yeo glide silently up the hill and into the camp, and whisper to Amyas that they have done the deed. The sleepers are awakened, and the train sets forth.

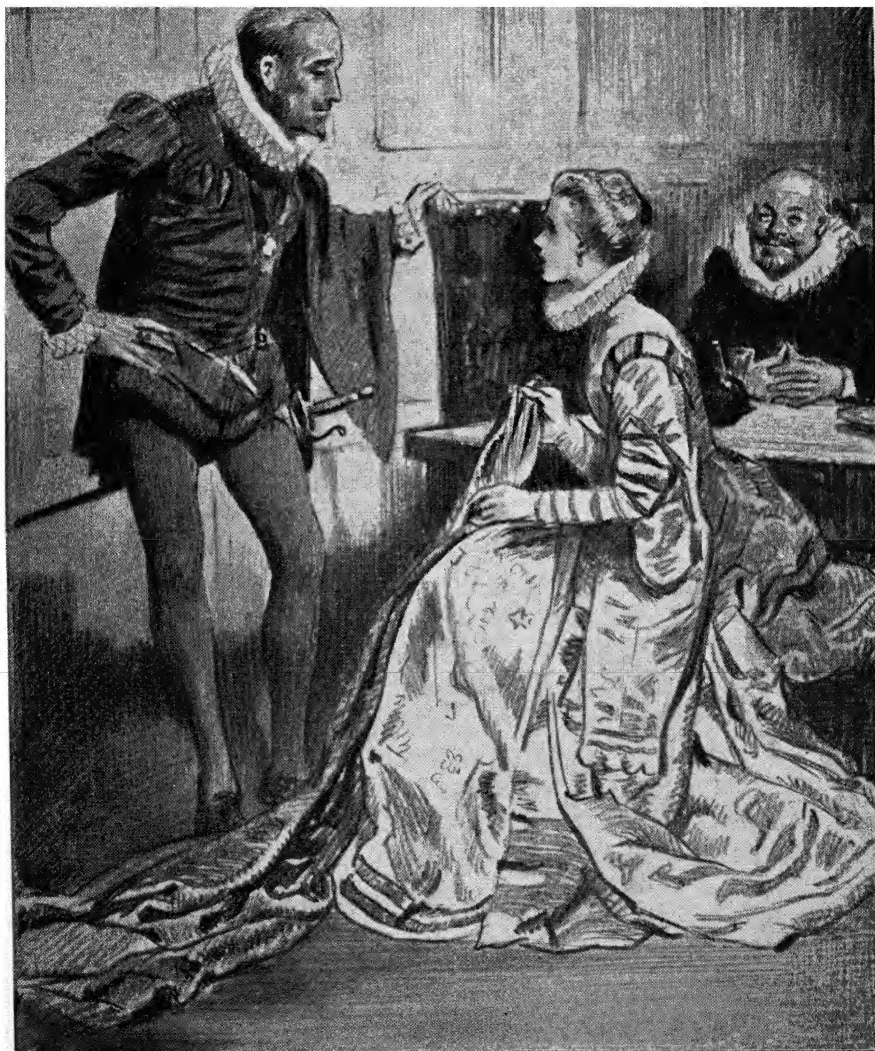
But what is that glare away to the northward ? Now through a cloud rises a column of black and lurid smoke ; the fog clears away right and left around it, and shows beneath a mighty fire.

The men look at each other with questioning eyes, each half suspecting, and yet not daring to confess their own suspicions ; and Amyas whispers to Yeo—

“ You took care to flood the powder ? ”

“ Ay, ay, sir, and to unload the ordnance too. No use in making a noise to tell the Spaniards our whereabouts.”

Yes ; that glare rises from the good ship *Rose*. Amyas has burnt his ship, and retreat is now impossible. Forward into the unknown abyss of the New World, and God be with them as they go !



‘Don Guzman was the suitor whom Rose favoured’ — *Page 49*

CHAPTER X

AYACANORA

Nearly three years are past and gone since that little band had knelt at evensong beneath the giant tree of Guayra—years of seeming blank, through which they are to be tracked only by scattered notes and misspelt names. Through untrodden hills and forests, over a space of some eight hundred miles in length by four hundred in breadth, they had been seeking for the Golden City, and they had sought in vain. They had sought it along the wooded banks of the Orinoco, and beyond the roaring foam-world of Maypures, and on the upper waters of the mighty Amazon. They had gone up the streams even into Peru itself. They had seen the virgin snows of Chimborazo towering white above the thunder-cloud, and the giant cone of Cotopaxi blackening in its sullen wrath before the fiery streams rolled down its sides. Foiled in their search at the back of the Andes, they had turned eastward once more. Slowly and painfully they had worked their way northward again, along the eastern foot of the inland Cordillera, and now they were bivouacking, as it seems, upon one of the many feeders of the Meta.

There they sit at last—four-and-forty men out of the eighty-four who left the tree of Guayra. Where are the rest ?

Drew, the master, lies on the banks of the Rio Negro, and five brave fellows by him, slain in fight by the poisoned arrows of the Indians ; two more lie amid the valleys of the Andes, frozen to death by the fierce slaty hail which sweeps down from the condor's eyrie ; four more were drowned at one of the rapids of the Orinoco ; five or six

more wounded men are left behind at another rapid among friendly Indians, to be recovered when they can be—perhaps never. Fever, snakes, jaguars, alligators, have thinned their ranks month by month.

Amyas, Cary, and Brimblecombe took counsel, that night, with Yeo; and a plan was matured, desperate enough. But what cared those brave hearts for that? They would cross the Cordillera to Santa Fé de Bogotá, of the wealth whereof both Yeo and Amyas had often heard in the Pacific; try to seize either the town, or some convoy of gold going from it; make for the nearest river (there was said to be a large one which ran northward thence), build canoes, and try to reach the Northern Sea once more; and then, if Heaven prospered them, they might seize a Spanish ship, and make their way home to England—not, indeed, with the wealth of Manoa, but with a fair booty of Spanish gold.

They started next morning quite cheerfully, and, that same day, fell in with a tribe of friendly Indians, with whom they stayed long enough for Cary to go and fetch the sick men from the Orinoco.

With this tribe dwelt a wondrously beautiful maiden, whom they called the “Daughter of the Sun,” and whom they revered as some divine being. The Indians had discovered her, some eleven years before, as they wandered on the mountain spurs beneath the flaming cone of Cotopaxi; wondering at the white skin and delicate beauty of the child, then about seven years of age, they had led her home with them, and she had grown up among them, tended with royal honours.

While the Englishmen stayed in the neighbourhood of her tribe, Ayacanora (for such was her name) became deeply attached to Amyas Leigh; and she was greatly grieved, when he and his men had to depart.

A fortnight or more afterwards, the adventurers intercepted a Spanish gold-train which was going down from Santa Fé toward the Magdalena ;¹ and so they came into possession of great riches. In this hour of triumph, Ayacanora appeared anew upon the scene ; and, as she insisted on accompanying the English, Amyas allowed her to do so.

Two canoes were made, and in these the adventurers journeyed down the River Magdalena to the Caribbean Sea. In the Bay of Santa Martha, off the shore of New Granada,² they captured, by deep cunning as well as great courage, a Spanish galleon called *The City of the True Cross*, and set sail for England.

On board this vessel was, by a strange chance, the very woman, Lucy Passmore, who had accompanied Rose Salterne in her flight from England. Lucy, having been condemned by the Inquisition to perpetual imprisonment, was on her way to Seville to serve that sentence. Being now, as by some miracle, restored to freedom, she related to Amyas how both his brother Frank and Rose had been burnt at the stake at Carthagená. When Amyas had heard her story, he vowed to give no quarter to Spaniards, wherever he should henceforth find them.

On the homeward voyage, Salvation Yeo discovered, by what Ayacanora told him of her earliest recollections, that she was none other than the “ little maid ” of whom he had been so long in search—the daughter of his old captain, Mr. John Oxenham.

In the evening of the fifteenth of February, 1587, Amyas was once again at home. Mrs. Leigh not only gave him a mother’s welcome, but received Ayacanora also with the most motherly kindness, and the maiden became one of the family.

CHAPTER XI

HOW AMYAS THREW HIS SWORD INTO THE SEA

In accordance with a solemn promise by which Mrs. Leigh bound her only surviving son, Amyas remained at home with her for the next twelvemonth. Then came the fateful year 1588, and, in July, the Invincible Armada.

Amyas Leigh, as captain of the ship *Vengeance*, took part in the running fight up Channel, and so distinguished himself that he received the great honour of knighthood.

Sir Amyas discovered that his enemy, Don Guzman, on whom he thirsted to revenge the deaths of his brother and of Rose, was commandant of soldiery on board a Spanish galleon called the *Santa Catharina*. After the defeat of the Armada, the *Vengeance* relentlessly pursued this vessel over the North Sea, and on the other side of Scotland, to the Isle of Man, and down the coast of Wales, until, at length, arrived the sixteenth day of the chase.

Amyas paced the sloppy deck fretfully and fiercely. He knew that the Spaniard could not escape ; but he cursed every moment which lingered between him and that one great revenge which blackened all his soul. The men sat sulkily about the deck, and whistled for a wind ; the sails flapped idly against the masts ; and the ship rolled in the long troughs of the sea, till her yardarms almost dipped right and left.

"Take care of those guns. You will have something loose next," growled Amyas.

"We will take care of the guns, if the Lord will take care of the wind," said Yeo.

"We shall have plenty before night," said Cary, "and thunder too."

"So much the better," said Amyas. "It may roar till it splits the heavens, if it does but let me get my work done."

"He's not far off, I warrant," said Cary. "One lift of the cloud, and we should see him."

"To windward of us, as likely as not," said Amyas.

So the morning wore away, without a sign of living thing, not even a passing gull; and the black melancholy of the heaven reflected itself in the black melancholy of Amyas. Was he to lose his prey after all? The thought made him shudder with rage and disappointment. It was intolerable. Anything but that.

"Here she is!" thundered Amyas from the deck, while the men were at dinner; and in an instant all were scrambling up the hatchway as fast as the frantic rolling of the ship would let them.

Yes. There she was. The cloud had lifted suddenly, and to the south a ragged bore of blue sky let a long stream of sunshine down on her tall masts and stately hull, as she lay rolling some four or five miles to the eastward; but as for land, none was to be seen.

"There she is, and here we are," said Cary; "but where is here? and where is there?—How is the tide, master?"

"Running up Channel by this time, sir."

"What matters the tide?" said Amyas, devouring the ship with terrible and cold blue eyes. "Can't we get at her?"

"Not unless some one jumps out and shoves behind," said Cary. "I shall down again and finish that mackerel, if this roll has not chucked it to the cockroaches."

"Don't jest, Will! I can't stand it," said Amyas, in a voice which quivered so much that Cary looked at him. His whole frame was trembling like an aspen.

As Cary passed down the hatchway, he looked back. Amyas had got a hone out of his pocket, and was whetting away again at his sword-edge.

About two Yeo came up to him.

"He is ours safely now, sir. The tide has been running to the eastward for this two hours."

"Safe as a fox in a trap. Satan himself cannot take him from us !"

"But God may," said Brimblecombe, simply.

"Who spoke to you, sir ? If I thought that He—there comes the thunder at last !"

And as he spoke, an angry growl from the westward heavens seemed to answer his wild words, and rolled and loudened nearer and nearer, till right over their heads it crashed against some cloud-cliff far above, and all was still.

Each man looked in the other's face ; but Amyas was unmoved.

"The storm is coming," said he, "and the wind in it. It will be Eastward ho now, for once, my merry men all !"

By this time all eyes were turned to the north-west, where a black line along the horizon began to define the boundary of sea and air, till now all dim in mist.

"There comes the breeze !"

"And there the storm, too !"

And with that strangely accelerating pace which some storms seem to possess, the thunder, which had been growling slow and seldom far away, now rang peal on peal along the cloudy floor above their heads.

"Here comes the breeze ! Round with the yards, or we shall be taken aback !"

The yards creaked round ; the sea grew crisp around them ; the hot air swept their cheeks, tightened every

rope, filled every sail, bent her over. A cheer burst from the men as the helm went up, and they staggered away before the wind, right down upon the Spaniard, who lay still becalmed.

"There is more behind, Amyas," said Cary. "Shall we not shorten sail a little?"

"No. Hold on every stitch," said Amyas. "Give me the helm, man. Boatswain, pipe away to clear for fight."

It was done, and in ten minutes the men were all at quarters, while the thunder rolled louder and louder overhead, and the breeze freshened fast.

"The dog has it now. There he goes!" said Cary.

"Right before the wind. He has no liking to face us."

"He is running into the jaws of destruction," said Yeo. "An hour more will send him either right up the Channel, or smack on shore somewhere."

"There! he has put his helm down. I wonder if he sees land?"

"He is like a March hare beat out of his country," said Cary, "and don't know whither to run next."

Cary was right. In ten minutes more the Spaniard went away dead down wind, while the *Vengeance* gained on him fast. After two hours more the four miles had diminished to one, while the lightning flashed nearer and nearer, as the storm came up; and from the vast mouth of a black cloud-arch poured so fierce a breeze that Amyas yielded unwillingly to hints which were growing into open murmurs, and bade shorten sail.

On they rushed with scarcely lessened speed, the black arch following fast, curtained by one flat grey sheet of pouring rain, before which the water was boiling in a long white line; while every moment, behind the

watery veil, a keen blue spark leapt down into the sea, or darted zigzag through the rain.

“We shall have it now, and with a vengeance; this will try your tackle, master,” said Cary.

The functionary answered with a shrug, and turned up the collar of his rough frock, as the first drops flew stinging round his ears. Another minute, and the squall burst full upon them in rain which cut like hail—hail which lashed the sea into froth, and wind which whirled off the heads of the surges, and swept the waters into one white seething waste. And above them, and behind them, and before them, the lightning leapt and ran, dazzling and blinding, while the deep roar of the thunder was changed to sharp, ear-piercing cracks.

“Get the arms and ammunition under cover, and then below with you all,” shouted Amyas from the helm.

“And heat the pokers in the galley fire,” said Yeo, “to be ready if the rain puts our linstocks¹ out. I hope you’ll let me stay on deck, sir, in case——”

“I must have some one, and who better than you? Can you see the chase?”

No; she was wrapped in the grey whirlwind. She might be within half a mile of them, for aught they could have seen of her.

And now Amyas and his old liegeman were alone. Neither spoke; each knew the other’s thoughts, and knew that they were his own. The squall blew fiercer and fiercer, the rain poured heavier and heavier. Where was the Spaniard?

“If he has laid-to, we may overshoot him, sir!”

“If he has tried to lay-to, he will not have a sail left in the bolt-ropes,² or perhaps a mast on deck. I know the stiff-neckedness of those Spanish tubs. Hurrah! there he is, right on our larboard bow!”

There she was, indeed, two musket-shots off, staggering away with canvas split and flying.

"He has been trying to hull, sir, and caught a buffet," said Yeo, rubbing his hands. "What shall we do now ?"

"Range alongside, if it blow live imps and witches, and try our luck once more. Pah ! how this lightning dazzles !"

On they swept, gaining fast on the Spaniard.

"Call the men up, and to quarters ; the rain will be over in ten minutes."

Yeo ran forward to the gangway, and sprang back again with a face white and wild.

"Land right ahead ! Port your helm, sir ! For the love of God, port your helm !"

Amyas, with the strength of a bull, jammed the helm down, while Yeo shouted to the men below.

She swung round. The masts bent like whips ; crack went the foresail like a cannon. What matter ? Within two hundred yards of them was the Spaniard ; in front of her, and above her, a huge dark bank rose through the dense hail, and mingled with the clouds ; and at its foot, plainer every moment, pillars and spouts of leaping foam.

"Lundy !" said Yeo. "The south end ! I see the head of the Shutter in the breakers ! Hard a-port yet, and get her close-hauled as you can, and the Lord may have mercy on us still ! Look at the Spaniard !"

Yes, look at the Spaniard !

On their left hand, as they broached-to, the wall of granite sloped down from the clouds toward an isolated peak of rock, some two hundred feet in height. Then a hundred yards of roaring breaker upon a sunken shelf, across which the race of the tide poured like a cataract ;

then, amid a column of salt smoke, the Shutter, like a huge black fang, rose waiting for its prey ; and, between the Shutter and the land, the great galleon loomed dimly through the storm.

He, too, had seen his danger, and tried to broach-to. But his clumsy mass refused to obey the helm. He struggled a moment, half hid in foam, fell away again, and rushed upon his doom.

“Lost ! lost ! lost !” cried Amyas madly, and, throwing up his hands, let go the tiller. Yeo caught it just in time.

“Sir ! sir ! what are you at ? We shall clear the rock yet.”

“Yes !” shouted Amyas in his frenzy ; “but he will not !”

Another minute. The galleon gave a sudden jar, and stopped. Then one long heave and bound, as if to free himself. And then his bows lighted clean upon the Shutter.

An awful silence fell on every English soul. They heard not the roaring of wind and surge ; they saw not the blinding flashes of the lightning ; but they heard one long ear-piercing wail to every saint in heaven rise from five hundred human throats ; they saw the mighty ship heel over from the wind, and sweep headlong down the cataract of the race, plunging her yards into the foam, and showing her whole black side even to her keel, till she rolled clean over, and vanished for ever and ever.

“Shame !” cried Amyas, hurling his sword far into the sea, “to lose my right, my right ! when it was in my very grasp ! Unmerciful !”

A crack which rent the sky, and made the granite ring and quiver ; a bright world of flame, and then a blank of utter darkness, against which stood out, glowing red-

hot, every mast, and sail, and rock, and Salvation Yeo as he stood just in front of Amyas, the tiller in his hand. All red-hot, transfigured into fire ; and behind, the black, black night.

* * * * *

A whisper, a rustling close beside him, and Brimblecombe's voice said softly —

"Give him more wine, Will ; his eyes are opening."

"Hey-dey !" said Amyas faintly, "not past the Shutter yet ? How long she hangs in the wind !"

"We are long past the Shutter, Sir Amyas," said Brimblecombe.

"Are you mad ? Cannot I trust my own eyes ?"

There was no answer for a while.

"We are past the Shutter, indeed," said Cary, very gently, "and lying in the cove at Lundy."

"Will you tell me that that is not the Shutter, and that the Devil's Limekiln, and that the cliff—that villain Spaniard only gone—and that Yeo is not standing here by me, and Cary there forward, and—why, by-the-bye, where are you, Jack Brimblecombe, who were talking to me this minute ?"

"Oh, Sir Amyas Leigh, dear Sir Amyas Leigh," blubbered poor Jack, "put out your hand, and feel where you are, and pray the Lord to forgive you for your wilfulness !"

A great trembling fell upon Amyas Leigh. Half fearfully he put out his hand ; he felt that he was in his hammock, with the deck beams close above his head. The vision which had been left upon his eyeballs vanished like a dream.

"What is this ? I must be asleep ! What has happened ? Where am I ?"

"In your cabin, Amyas," said Cary.

“What ? And where is Yeo ? ”

“Yeo is gone where he longed to go, and as he longed to go. The same flash which struck you down struck him dead.”

“Dead ? Lightning ? Any more hurt ? I must go and see ! Why, what is this ? ” and Amyas passed his hand across his eyes. “It is all dark –dark, as I live ! ” And he passed his hand over his eyes again.

There was another dead silence. Amyas broke it.

“Oh, God ! ” shrieked the great proud sea-captain, “Oh, God, I am blind ! blind ! blind ! ”

They lifted him into their remaining boat, rowed him ashore, carried him painfully up the hill to the old castle, and made a bed for him on the floor, in the very room in which Don Guzman and Rose Salterne had plighted their troth to each other five wild years before.

Three miserable days were passed within that lonely tower. Amyas, utterly unnerved by the horror of his misfortune, and by the over-excitement of the last few weeks, was incessantly delirious ; while Cary, and Brimblecombe, and the men nursed him by turns, as sailors and wives only can nurse.

On the fourth day his raving ceased, but he was still too weak to be moved. Toward noon, however, he called for food, ate a little, and seemed revived.

“Will,” he said, after a while, “this room is as stifling as it is dark. I feel as if I should be a sound man once more, if I could but get one snuff of the sea-breeze. —Will Cary, Jack Brimblecombe, will you obey a blind general ? ”

“What you will in reason,” said they both at once.

“Then lead me out, my masters, and over the down to the south end. To the point at the south end I must go ; there is no other place will suit.”

And he rose firmly to his feet, and held out his hands for theirs. They set forth, Amyas walking slowly, but firmly, between his two friends.

"Whither?" asked Cary.

"To the south end—the crag above the Devil's Limekiln. No other place will suit."

Jack gave a murmur, and half stopped, as a frightful suspicion crossed him.

"That is a dangerous place!"

"What of that?" said Amyas, who caught his meaning in his tone. "Dost think I am going to leap over cliff? I have not heart enough for that. On, lads, and set me safe among the rocks."

So, slowly and painfully, they went on, while Amyas murmured to himself—

"No, no other place will suit; I can see all thence."

So on they went to the point, where the cyclopean wall of granite cliff, which forms the western side of Lundy, ends sheer in a precipice of some three hundred feet, topped by a pile of snow-white rock, bespangled with golden lichens.

"Now set me where I can rest among the rocks without fear of falling—for life is sweet still, even without eyes, friends—and leave me to myself a while," said Amyas.

"You can sit here as in an arm-chair," said Cary, helping him down to one of those square natural seats so common in the granite tors.

"Good; now turn my face to the Shutter. Be sure and exact. So. Do I face it full?"

"Full," said Cary.

"Then I need no eyes wherewith to see what is before me," said he, with a sad smile. "I know every stone and every headland, and every wave too, I may say, far

beyond aught that eye can reach. Now go, and leave me alone with God and with the dead ! ”

They retired a little space and watched him. He never stirred for many minutes ; then leaned his elbows on his knees, and his head upon his hands, and so was still again. He remained so long thus, that the pair became anxious, and went towards him. He was asleep, and breathing quick and heavily.

“ He will take a fever,” said Brimblecombe, “ if he sleeps much longer with his head down in the sunshine.”

“ We must wake him gently, if we wake him at all.” And Cary moved forward to him.

As he did so, Amyas lifted his head, and, turning it to right and left, felt round him with his sightless eyes.

“ You have been asleep, Amyas.”

“ Have I ? I have not slept back my eyes, then. Take up this great useless carcass of mine, and lead me home. I shall buy me a dog when I get to Burrough, I think, and make him tow me in a string, eh ? So ! Give me your hand. Now, march ! ”

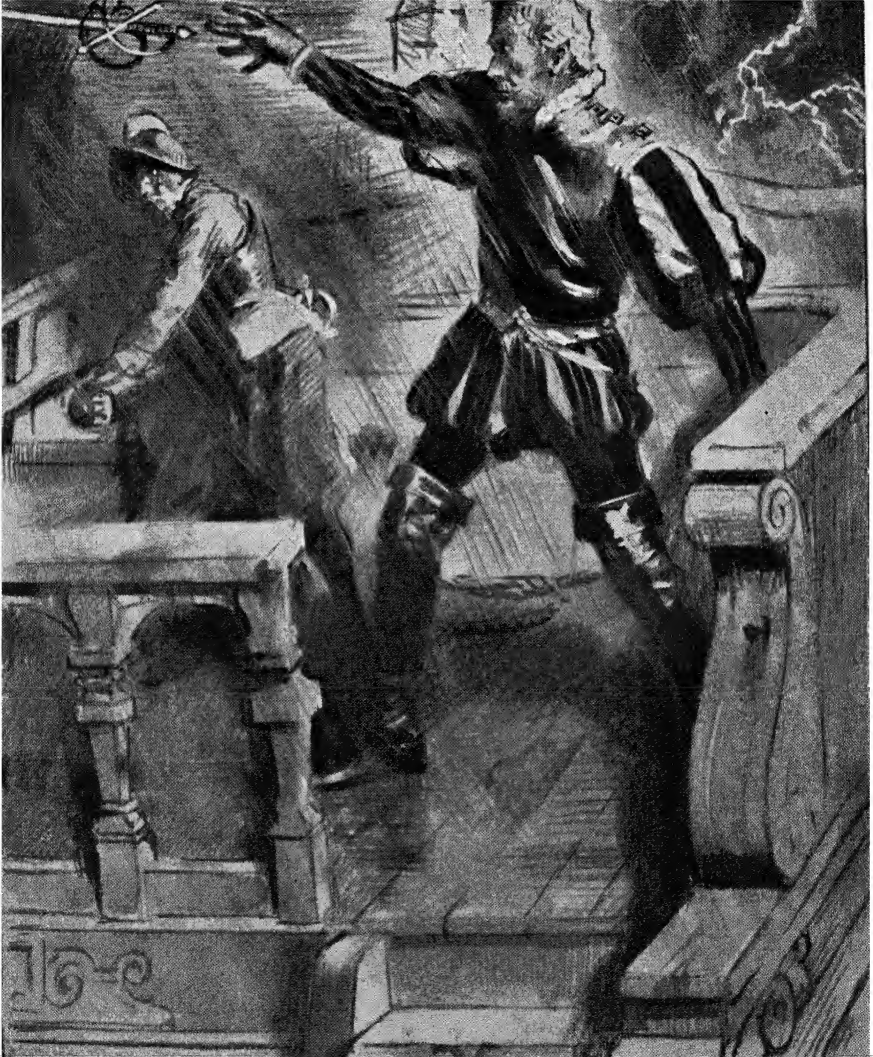
His guides heard with surprise this new cheerfulness.

“ Thank God, sir, that your heart is so light already,” said good Jack. “ It makes me feel quite upraised myself, like.”

“ I have reason to be cheerful, Sir John ; I have left a heavy load behind me. I have been wilful, and proud, and a blasphemer, and swollen with cruelty and pride ; and God has brought me low for it, and cut me off from my evil delight. No more Spaniard-hunting for me now, my masters. God will send no such fools as I upon His errands.”

“ You do not repent of fighting the Spaniards ? ”

“ Not I ; but of hating even the worst of them. Listen to me, Will and Jack. If that man wronged me,



“Shame!” cried Amyas, hurling his sword far into the sea’—Page 81

I wronged him likewise. I have been a fiend, when I thought myself the grandest of men—yea, a very avenging angel out of heaven. But God has shown me my sin, and we have made up our quarrel for ever.”

“Made it up?”

“Made it up, thank God. But I am weary. Set me down awhile, and I will tell you how it befell.”

Wondering, they set him down upon the heather, while the bees hummed round them in the sun; and Amyas felt for a hand of each, and clasped it in his own hand, and began:—

“When you left me there upon the rock, lads, I looked away and out to sea, to get one last snuff of the merry sea-breeze, which will never sail me again. And as I looked, I tell you truth, I could see the water and the sky as plain as ever I saw them, till I thought my sight was come again. But soon I knew it was not so; for I saw more than man could see—right over the ocean, as I live, and away to the Spanish Main. And I saw all the isles that we ever sailed by; and La Guayra, and the house where she lived. And I saw him walking with her, on the barbecu, and he loved her then. I saw what I saw; and he loved her; and I say he loves her still.

“Then I saw the cliffs beneath me, and the Gull Rock, and the Shutter, and the Ledge; I saw them, William Cary, and the weeds beneath the merry blue sea. And I saw the grand old galleon, Will; she has righted with the sweeping of the tide. She lies in fifteen fathoms, at the edge of the rocks, upon the sand; and her men are all lying around her, asleep until the judgment day.”

Cary and Jack looked at him, and then at each other. His eyes were clear, and bright, and full of meaning; and yet they knew that he was blind. His voice was shaping itself into a song. Was he inspired? Insane? What

was it ? And they listened with awestruck faces, as the giant pointed down into the blue depths far below, and went on :—

“ And I saw him sitting in his cabin, like a valiant gentleman of Spain ; and his officers were sitting round him, with their swords upon the table, at the wine. And the prawns and the crayfish and the rockling, they swam in and out above their heads ; but Don Guzman he never heeded, but sat still, and drank his wine. Then he took a locket from his bosom ; and I heard him speak, Will, and he said, ‘ Here’s the picture of my fair and true lady ; drink to her, señors all.’ Then he spoke to me, Will, and called me, right up through the oar-weed and the sea : ‘ We have had a fair quarrel, señor ; it is time to be friends once more. My wife and your brother have forgiven me, so your honour takes no stain.’ And I answered, ‘ We are friends, Don Guzman ; God has judged our quarrel, and not we.’ Then he said, ‘ I sinned, and I am punished.’ And I said, ‘ And, señor, so am I.’ Then he held out his hand to me, Cary, and I stooped to take it, and awoke.”

He ceased, and they looked in his face again. It was exhausted, but clear and gentle, like the face of a new-born babe. Gradually his head dropped upon his breast again. He was either swooning or sleeping, and they had much ado to get him home. There he lay for eight-and-forty hours in a quiet doze ; then arose suddenly, called for food, ate heartily, and seemed, saving his eyesight, as whole and sound as ever, and willing enough to go home. So the next day the *Vengeance* sailed, leaving behind a dozen men to seize and keep in the Queen’s name any goods which should be washed up from the wreck.

CHAPTER XII

HOW AMYAS LET THE APPLE FALL

It was the first of October. The morning was bright and still ; the skies were dappled modestly from east to west with soft grey autumn cloud, as if all heaven and earth were resting after those fearful summer months of battle and of storm. The *Vengeance* slid over the bar, and passed the sleeping sand-hills, and dropped her anchor off Appledore. A boat pulled off from the ship, and away to the western end of the strand ; and Cary and Brimblecombe helped out Amyas Leigh, and led him slowly up the hill towards his home.

He seemed to know perfectly when they had reached the gates, opened the lock with his own hands, and went boldly forward along the gravel path, while Cary and Brimblecombe followed him trembling ; for they expected some violent burst of emotion, either from him or his mother, and the two good fellows' tender hearts were fluttering like a girl's. Up to the door he went, as if he had seen it, felt for the entrance, stood therein, and called quietly, " Mother ! "

In a moment his mother was on his bosom.

Neither spoke for a while—she sobbing inwardly, with tearless eyes, he standing firm and cheerful, with his great arms clasped around her.

" Mother," he said at last, " I am come home, you see, because I needs must come. Will you take me in and look after this useless carcass ? I shall not be so very troublesome, mother, shall I ? " and he looked down, and smiled upon her, and kissed her brow.

She answered not a word, but passed her arm gently round his waist, and led him in.

“Take care of your head, dear child, the doors are low.” And they went in together.

“Will ! Jack !” called Amyas, turning round ; but the two good fellows had walked briskly off.

And Amyas was sitting all alone. His mother had gone out for a few minutes to speak to the seamen who had brought up Amyas’s luggage, and set them down to eat and drink ; and Amyas sat in the old bay window, where he had sat when he was a little tiny boy. There was a dish of apples on the table : he knew it by their smell ; the very same old apples which he used to gather when he was a boy. He put out his hand, and took them, and felt them over, and played with them, just as if the twenty years had never been.

At last one of them slipped through his fingers, and fell on the floor. He stooped and felt for it, but he could not find it. He turned hastily to search in another direction, and struck his head sharply against the table. Was it the pain, or the little disappointment ? Or was it the sense of his blindness brought home to him ? Or had he become indeed a child once more ? I know not ; but so it was, that he stamped on the floor with pettishness, and then, checking himself, burst into a violent flood of tears.

A quick rustle passed him, the apple was replaced in his hand, and Ayacanora’s voice sobbed out—

“There ! there it is ! Do not weep ! Oh, do not weep ! I cannot bear it ! I will get you all you want ! Only let me fetch and carry for you, tend you, feed you, lead you, like your slave, your dog ! Say that I may be your slave !” and, falling on her knees at his feet, she seized both his hands, and covered them with kisses.

“Yes !” she cried, “I will be your slave ! I must be ! You cannot help it ! You cannot escape from me

now ! You cannot go to sea ! You cannot turn your back upon poor wretched me. I have you safe now ! Safe ! ” and she clutched his hands triumphantly. “ Ah ! and what a wretch I am, to rejoice in that ! to taunt him with his blindness ! Oh, forgive me ! I am but a poor wild girl—a wild Indian savage, you know ; but—but—— ” and she burst into tears.

A great spasm shook the body and soul of Amyas Leigh. He sat quite silent for a minute, and then said solemnly—

“ And is this still possible ? Then God have mercy upon me a sinner ! ”

Ayacanora looked up in his face inquiringly ; but before she could speak again, he had bent down, and, lifting her as the lion lifts the lamb, pressed her to his bosom, and covered her face with kisses.

The door opened. There was the rustle of a gown. Ayacanora sprang from him with a little cry, and stood, half trembling, half defiant, as if to say, “ He is mine now ; no one dare part him from me ! ”

“ Who is it ? ” asked Amyas.

“ Your mother.”

“ You see that I am bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, mother,” said he, with a smile.

He heard her approach. Then a kiss and a sob passed between the women, and he felt Ayacanora sink once more upon his bosom.

“ Amyas, my son,” said the silver voice of Mrs. Leigh, “ fear not to take her to your heart again, for it is your mother who has laid her there.”

“ It is true after all,” said Amyas to himself. “ What God has joined together, man cannot put asunder.”

NOTES

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- 5 **Bideford**, a seaport in north-west Devon, on the River Torridge.

The world's treasure-house. This was at Nombre de Dios, a small port which the Spaniards had founded on the northern coast of the Isthmus of Panama. The gold and silver brought from the Peruvian mines were unshipped at Panama, conveyed across the Isthmus by mule-trains, and stored at Nombre in readiness for transmission to Spain.

- 6 **Young Drake**, Francis Drake's younger brother, John.

Quesal bird, now called the "paradise trogon," a bird of brilliant plumage, golden-green above, and bright-crimson below. It was held sacred by the ancient inhabitants of Central America.

South Tawton, a village on the Taw, in Mid Devon. Oxenham Manor House is situated here.

To, used for *at* in Devonshire dialect.

- 7 **Ruttier**, the chart of a ship's course.

Mun, a dialect word for *it*.

- 8 **Plate-ships**, ships conveying treasure. *Plate* formerly meant precious metal, especially silver.

Marry, a corruption of the name of the Virgin Mary, and meaning "By Mary!"

Tester, a coin worth sixpence at the period of this story.

- 9 **Sir Richard Grenville** (1541-91), a celebrated naval commander. Tennyson's *Ballad of the Fleet* tells how his ship, the *Revenge*, fought against fifty-three Spanish vessels, in 1591.

Noble, a former gold coin, equivalent to six shillings and eightpence.

- 10 **Good words**, words of good omen.

Malmsey, a rich, sweet wine, originally made in Greece, and so called from Malvasia, a seaport in southern Greece.

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- 11 **The bird with the white breast.** Charles Kingsley obtained many of his facts from John Prince's *Worthies of Devon* (1701). Here it is recorded of the Oxenham family that, "at the deaths of any of them, a bird with a white breast is seen for a while fluttering about their beds."

- 12 **The pool**, the deep part of the stream (mouth of the Torridge), at Appledore, three miles north of Bideford.

- 13 **Hautboys**, wind instruments, now called oboes.

- 14 **Round the world with Francis Drake.** Drake started from Plymouth Sound in December, 1577, passed through the Straits of Magellan, obtained enormous booty along the Pacific coast, then crossed the Pacific to the Moluccas, and entered the Indian Ocean by the Straits of Sunda. The Cape of Good Hope was rounded; and Plymouth Sound was reached in September, 1580. Drake and his men were the first English to go right round the world.

"The heaven the children of men." The text is the sixteenth verse of *Psaln* cxv.

The Te Deum, a very ancient hymn sung at Morning Prayer, and also on special occasions of thanksgiving. Its first words are, in Latin, "Te Deum laudamus"—in English, "We praise Thee, O God."

- 15 **Christ His sake.** The possessive case of nouns was formerly denoted by the ending *-es* or *-is*. The *-is* was sometimes written separately, and so became confused with *his*. Hence arose such expressions as "Christ His sake," which is still retained in the Book of Common Prayer.

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16 Andrew Barker, a Bristol merchant who traded with Spanish settlements in the New World; he was killed by Spaniards in 1577.

Caravel, a vessel used by Spaniards and Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially for long voyages. It carried three, or four, masts, and was built broad at the bows, high and narrow at the poop.

Honduras, then a Spanish province in Central America. The name is Spanish for *depths*, and was occasioned by the depth of the water off the coast.

A rose noble, a former gold coin, so called from the rose which figured on it. In Queen Elizabeth's time, its value varied from ten to fifteen shillings.

17 Winter, a noted naval commander in Elizabethan times. John Winter had been vice-admiral in Drake's voyage round the world. When Drake's *Pelican* and Winter's *Elizabeth* came out of the Straits of Magellan, they encountered terrible weather, and were driven six hundred miles to the west. The storm somewhat abating, they made for a bay afterwards called "The Parting of Friends." The *Pelican* was driven out to sea again; and Winter re-entered the Straits, where he waited a month for his admiral, but in vain. He then decided to return to England. Such was the alleged "desertion" which embittered the *Pelican* men against him.

Smerwick, on the coast of County Kerry. In 1580, the Irish of Munster, led on by the Earl of Desmond, rebelled against Queen Elizabeth, and a force of Spaniards and Italians landed at Smerwick to help the rebels. Lord Grey of Wilton, then the Viceroy of Ireland, was supported by a naval force under Admiral Winter, in his operations against the invaders.

A masterless man, one who is not in employment. Hence, in the statutes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

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the expression denoted a man who was without honest means of livelihood, and was liable to punishment as a "rogue and vagabond."

18 Halidame, (more correctly **halidom**) an old word meaning *holiness*, and formerly much used in making positive assertions or solemn declarations.

Launceston, a borough and market-town in north-east Cornwall. The assizes were formerly held here (but now at Bodmin) and it is to these that Sir Richard is referring.

19 Padstow Port, a seaport; on the estuary of the River Camel, north coast of Cornwall.

21 Anabaptists, a sect of Christians not holding with the baptism of infants, but requiring it from adult believers. They arose in the early part of the sixteenth century, and the Baptists are their present-day representatives.

Captain Hawkins. John Hawkins (1532-95) made his first slave-trading voyage in 1562-63, going with three ships to Sierra Leone, kidnapping negroes there, and then taking them across the Atlantic to San Domingo, where he disposed of them to Spanish colonists in exchange for hides and other goods. The second voyage was in 1564-65. In the third voyage (1567-69), Hawkins came to grief, most of his ships being destroyed by Spaniards in the harbour of Vera Cruz, Mexico.

The South Seas, the Pacific Ocean.

22 New Spain, the name which the Spaniards gave to their Mexican dominions.

23 Cabo San Francisco, Cape St. Francis, a noted headland on the coast of Ecuador, South America.

Cacafuego, more correctly *Cacafuego*, that is, the *Spitfire*.

28 The North Sea, (as the term was used by Elizabethan seamen) the Caribbean Sea, being situated to the north of the

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Isthmus of Panama. The Pacific, having been first seen extending south of the Isthmus, was called the "South Sea."

- 28 **Marazion**, a seaport on Mounts Bay, Cornwall, situated some three miles east of Penzance. Tin was smelted here at a very early period, and the name "Marazion" (the place is also called "Market Jew") has possibly some connection with Phœnician traders who anciently came for this metal.

Lagartos, alligators (from Spanish *el lagarto*, the lizard).

- 31 **Guy of Warwick**, an Old English hero of legend, famous for having slain the Danish giant Colbrand (tenth century), and so relieved King Athelstan, whom a Danish army was then besieging at Winchester.

- 33 **Arquebusiers**, men armed with arquebuses. The arquebus (or harquebus) was a firearm introduced about the middle of the fifteenth century, it was usually fired from a rest or support. The musket took its place at the close of the sixteenth century.

- 36 **Carthagena**, a port on the north-east coast of South America, now the capital of the department of Bolívar (Republic of Colombia).

- 37 "Come to me . . . white as snow." *Isaiah*, i, 18: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." *St. Matthew*, xi, 28: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Barranco. Properly, this is Spanish, meaning "a ravine with steep sides." What is really meant is a barracoon (Spanish *barracón*), or large enclosure within which slaves or convicts are kept.

- 39 **Calentures**, delirious fevers occasioned by exposure to intense heat in the tropics.

- 40 **Northam**, a village situated a mile and a half north of Bideford.

- 42 **Fort del Oro**, Fort of Gold (so called from the golden-hued flag of Spain).

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- 42 **Condottieri**. The word is Italian for "captains." The *condottieri* were, properly, the leaders of the companies of mercenary soldiers that hired themselves out to fight the wars of the various Italian states from the thirteenth to the end of the fifteenth century. But the name was applied to the followers, as well as the leaders; and it is here used in the general sense of "military adventurers," "soldiers of fortune."

Gabions, wickerwork baskets, of cylinder shape. They are open at both ends, and are filled with earth for use in fortification.

- 46 **Town bull**, a bull kept in turn by the cowkeepers in a village (which "town" formerly meant, and still means in dialect use).

- 47 **Lord Grey of Wilton**, Arthur Grey (1536-93), Lord-Deputy, or Viceroy, of Ireland in 1580-82, when the poet Edmund Spenser was his secretary.

Argonauts, the fifty heroes who, according to ancient Greek legend, went with Jason, in the ship *Argo*, to obtain possession of the Golden Fleece.

- 48 **Hidalgo**, a man of gentle birth. This Spanish word is a contraction of *hijo de algo*, son of something, that is, of a "somebody."

- 50 **La Guayra**, the seaport of Caracas, which is the present capital of Venezuela. It is situated eight miles north of Caracas.

"**White witch**," one who uses her supposed powers of magic for the benefit of others.

- 51 **Make the Main**, reach the mainland (of the Spanish dominions in America). It is an extremely common error to suppose that the "Spanish Main" meant the Caribbean Sea.

- 52 **Bridgetown**, capital of Barbados, the most easterly of the West Indian Islands. **Carib**. The Caribs were a warlike race of South American Indians, who, at the period of the Spanish discovery and

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- conquest, inhabited the lower regions of the Orinoco, Guiana, and also the eastern and southern West Indian Islands.
- 53 Grenada**, one of the Windward Islands in the West Indies, now a British possession.
- Paria**. The Gulf of Paria is an inlet of the Caribbean Sea, between the island of Trinidad and the mainland of Venezuela; it is bounded on the north by the peninsula of Paria.
- Cape Codera**, on the coast of Venezuela, fifty miles east of La Guayra.
- 55 Open**, (as a sea-term) come in sight of.
- Patararoës**. A patararo (properly, as in Spanish, *pedrero*, from *pedra*, a stone) was a small cannon used for discharging stones, pieces of iron, and so forth.
- 58 Barbecu**. Properly, a barbecu is a cemented or asphalted floor on which coffee-beans, etc., are dried. But Kingsley uses the word in the sense of "a terrace of white plaster," a sort of veranda.
- 66 Close-hauled**, having the sails so trimmed that the head of the ship is kept as near as possible to windward. A ship thus making way to windward in a choppy sea is said to "thrash."
- Higuerote**, now a seaport of Venezuela, fifty-five miles east of Caracas.
- 67 Careening**. To careen a vessel is to turn it over on one side, so as to clean and repair below the waterline.
- 68 Cottonwood tree**, an American tree of the poplar kind, so called from the cottony tufts enveloping its seeds.
- 69 Cortes**. Hernando Cortes (1485-1547), the Spanish conqueror of the empire of Mexico, landed on the coast of that country in 1519, and, having bribed his pilots to report that his fleet was unseaworthy, he had it destroyed.
- Ceiba tree**. Properly *ceiba* is the Spanish name for the silkcotton tree, a tropical American tree so called because its seeds are covered with a silky fibre. Kingsley means the cottonwood tree previously mentioned.

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- 69 The Golden City**, or **Manoa**, the capital of a legendary king whom sixteenth-century Spaniards named *El Dorado*, or "The Gilded," and whose dominions "rich beyond the dreams of avarice," were supposed to be situated somewhere about the head-waters of the Orinoco.
- 72 Foam-world of Maypures**. Maypures is a place on the left bank of the Orinoco, and gives its name to some celebrated cataracts which break the course of that river.
- Cordillera**, Spanish for "a mountain-chain." The reference is here to the Andes.
- The Meta**, a river of Colombia and Venezuela, a tributary of the Orinoco.
- 73 Santa Fè de Bogotá**, now called Bogotá, and the present capital of the Republic of Colombia.
- 74 Magdalena**, the chief river of Colombia, falling into the Caribbean Sea.
- New Granada**, the name first given to the part of South America now called Colombia. Quesada, the Spanish conqueror, and founder (in 1538) of the city of Bogotá, was a native of the Spanish province of Granada.
- 76 Channel**, the Bristol Channel.
- 77 Taken aback**. When the wind bears the sails back against the masts, the vessel's progress is hindered, and the ship is said to be "taken aback."
- 78 The helm went up**, it was put to windward.
- Put his helm down**, put it to leeward.
- 79 Bolt-ropes**, ropes stitched on to the edges of sails.
- 80 To hull**, to drift with furled sails.
- Port your helm**, put it to the port, or left, side of the ship (looking from stern to bow).
- Broached-to**, came suddenly into the wind.
- 85 Sir John**. The title "Sir" was formerly given to clergymen, as the English for the Latin *dominus* (master), this being the university title for a man who has taken his degree.

QUESTIONS

1 Imagine that you were an eyewitness of the scene depicted in the Frontispiece. Write a description of the two central figures.

2 *Westward Ho!* contains some beautiful descriptions of the sea in its different moods. Write down six passages which you think are worth remembering.

3 Give an account of the return of Salvation Yeo, and a brief summary of his story of the unfortunate voyage of Mr. Oxenham.

4 Describe the incident in connection with the Spanish flag at Fort del Oro. What qualities in the character of Amyas did it show?

5 Tell the story of the capture of Don Guzman, as if you had yourself witnessed the occurrence.

6 For what purpose was the *Rose* equipped? Give an account of its adventures and fate.

7 Say what the tale has taught you of the following :—(a) Drake's voyage round the world ; (b) the Spanish Inquisition ; (c) the Spanish Armada.

8 Describe the chase of the *Santa Catharina*, the storm, and the wreck, writing as if you had been on board the *Vengeance* at the time.

9 Relate incidents from the story in which Amyas showed :—(a) courage ; (b) recklessness ; (c) anger ; (d) pettishness.

10 Which do you consider the least likeable character in the book? Give reasons for your judgment.

11 "I am but a poor wild girl—a wild Indian savage, you know." Who said this, and on what occasion? What part does the Indian girl play in the story?

12 What mention is there in *Westward Ho!* of Sir Richard Grenville? Get a copy of Tennyson's poem *The Revenge*, read it carefully, then write an account of the fight between the one English ship and the fifty-three Spanish ships.

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Grade 6

